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Bangalore Mirror ON SATURDAY

TEMP Max 32 | Min 21 | Humidity 54% Partly Cloudy Sensex 73,198 | Nifty 22,124 | Gold 84,565 | Silver 92,927 | Dollar 87.38 | Euro 90.94 | GBP 110.10

State human rights commission steps in, orders inquiry into complaint against menace of online gambling; officials asked to submit report in 15 days

DON'T BET ON IT

Complaint says aggressive advertising pushing many individuals into financial ruin

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The grave issue of online gambling sites has caught the attention of the Karnataka State Human Rights Commission (KSHRC). Thanks to a complaint that was brought to the commission on February 25, it has now directed the Additional Chief Secretaries of the Home Administration Department, to conduct an inquiry and submit a report about it.

In his complaint, BM Shivakumar, president, Jayaprakash Narayan Forum, raised concerns about the unchecked proliferation of online rummy and gambling platforms in the country. He alleged that the government has granted free permission to such platforms, leading to devastating consequences for many individuals. According to the complaint, aggressive advertising by these platforms encourages gambling, pushing many individuals into financial ruin. He further claimed that people enticed by these advertisements are losing their hard-earned money and property, falling into crippling debt, and in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

STEAMING HOT

Dangerous secret in your plate: Eateries continue to use plastic sheets to steam idlis despite health risks

PAGE 7

IODEX Active Muscle Care
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*Contains ingredients (Camphor, Eucalyptus Oil, Boswellia, Capsicum) known to provide relief from pain, fatigue and support relaxation.
[Makoto et al 2014, PMID: 25451841; Altman et al 1994; Mohsenzadeh et al 2023, PMID: 36869332; Babar. A et al, Pac J Trop Biomed 2015; 5(8): 601–611; Van Pelt et al 2021, PMID: 33720912]

Moon not yet sighted, Ramzan to begin on Mar 2

Festival returns to summer this year, so it will see longer fasting hours and intense heat; locals rise to occasion, make arrangements for those fasting

The crescent moon marking the beginning of Ramzan was not sighted on Friday, across Karnataka and several cities in other states, including Lucknow, and Vijayawada. Following a meeting by the Markazi Ruyat-e-Hilal (State Moon Committee of Karnataka), chaired by Ameer-e-Shariath Maulana Sagheer Ahmed Khan, scholars unanimously declared that the first day of Ramzan will be observed on Sunday, March 2, 2025.

This year, Ramzan returns to the summer months after nearly a decade, bringing longer fasting hours and intense heat for observers. As the lunar Islamic calendar shifts back by roughly 10 days each year, scholars note that in the coming years, the holy month will fall during a transition period, in relatively milder weather conditions.

For the next 11 years, Ramzan will fall during winter, bringing shorter and more comfortable fasting hours. This year, the fasting duration will start at 13 hours and 17 minutes, and gradually increase as summer progresses. By the last day of fasting on March 30, the duration will extend to 13 hours and 45 minutes, which is 28 minutes longer than the first day.

A festival of harmony

In conversation with BM, Syed Ubaidur Rahman, historian and author, said, "We have traditions of Muslims going to different temples and breaking their fasts there. This happened not just once or twice but many times in the past. Even a few years ago this age-old tradition was revived."

Additionally, he highlighted how several Hindu temples and shrines in coastal Karnataka have long upheld the tradition of organizing Iftar for fasting Muslims, a practice that continues even today in many remote areas. He also noted that many non-Muslims observe fasting alongside their Muslim friends, with the growing focus on health amongst youth further encouraging this practice.

Sehri arrangements

Mosques, local committees, and youth organizations are stepping up to make arrangements for those observing the fast. Across the city, volunteers are ensuring that no one goes hungry, especially students, working professionals, and those staying in hostels or PG accommodations.

This year, an initiative called BangaloreSehri aims to help those in need of Sehri arrangements during Ramzan. Individuals can register to find the nearest Sehri distribution point in their locality. With the help of volunteers and community support, this initiative aims to ensure that those away from home can still partake in the pre-dawn meal without any hassle.

BangaloreSehri connects Sehri providers with those in need of the service, benefiting thousands of people. Local youth committees and community groups in areas like Frazer Town, Shivajinagar, Jayanagar, and Koramangala also plan to organize free Sehri meals for students and bachelors. Many mosques and community halls are setting up designated Sehri spots, ensuring that everyone, regardless of their background, has access to food before starting their fast.

FORM-IV
(See Rule-8)

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Sd/-
R. J. PRAKASHAN
Printer & Publisher

Date: 01.03.2025

Innovative solution for small-scale farmers

Battery-operated mini tractor provides affordable alternative for small farmers who struggle with fuel costs

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The National Horticulture Fair 2025, organised by the Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR) in Hesaraghatta, is featuring a new innovation, a battery-operated, remote-controlled mini tractor which is designed specifically for small-scale farming. The unique display is drawing significant attention from farmers.

Affordable and efficient

An official said that this machine was an alternative for small farmers, as traditional diesel and petrol powered tractors often come at a high cost, making them unaffordable. The official highlighted that the battery-operated mini tractor has been introduced as a cost-effective and sustainable solution. He noted that the machine can pull a trolley with a 700 kg load capacity, and is equipped with a boom sprayer attachment for spraying pesticides on crops such as grapes, pomegranates, and mangoes. It is also capable of ploughing, weed cutting, trench digging, and row marking. Additionally, the machine supports nine different attachments, enabling multiple farming operations.

According to KV Narayanaswamy, a technician at a private company, this innovation provides a flexible and affordable alternative for small farmers who struggle with high fuel costs. The mini tractor is equipped with high-resolution cameras at the front and rear, allowing the operator to control it remotely from up to 700 meters away. Farmers can sit comfortably under a tree or in a shaded area, and operate the tractor using a remote control. With four to six hours on a full charge and just a trolley attached, it can run up to 10 hours. With rising fuel costs and the need for mechanisation in small-scale farming, this battery-powered, remote-controlled tractor offers a promising solution for cost-effective and sustainable agriculture.

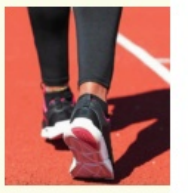
> **"Mini tractor is equipped with high-resolution cameras at the front and rear, allowing operator to control it from 700 mt away**

THINGS TO DO

01 Skill-development

Canadian International School (CIS) is hosting TeachConX 2025, a K-12 professional development conference, focused on Authentic Learning in the Age of AI. The event will consist of speakers like Dr Sugata Mitra, renowned for his groundbreaking research on Self-Organized Learning Environments (SOLE), and Nina Bual, a leading expert in cyber security, digital well-being, and responsible AI. **Where: Canadian International School, Yelahanka; When: March 6 and 7**

02 Walk for women's health



TriLife Hospital is organizing a walkathon titled "Woman-athon" based on the theme, "Accelerate Action Towards Your Health and Well-being". The event is dedicated to prioritizing women's health, well-being, and happiness. This 3 km walkathon is open to women and children, and will take place around Kalyan Nagar. **Where: KBC, Basketball Court, Kalyan Nagar; When: March 2, Assembly at 5.30 am | Flag Off at 7.00 am**

03 Acoustic evening

Padma Bhushan KS Chithra is set to perform at a concert that offers her timeless melodies across multiple languages, bringing together the best of classical, contemporary, and regional music in a single event. **Where: Phoenix Marketcity, Whitefield; When: March 9, 6 pm**

04 Theatrical spectacle

Pravara Theatre is bringing on stage K P Poornachandra Tejaswi's "Annana Nenapu". "Annana Nenapu" is a docu-play dramatized from the art novel of the same name, written by KP Poornachandra Tejaswi, and is Mahakavi Kuvempu's Memoir. **Where: Kalagrama Samskruthika Samuchaya, Mallathahalli; When: March 1, 7 pm**

05 Art display

Museum of Art & Photography (MAP) is presenting 'We don't end at our edges', an immersive exhibition featuring artworks by Bengaluru-based artist, writer and educator Ravikumar Kashi. He uses paper to 'paint' letters from the Kannada alphabet, transforming language itself into a metaphor for the permeability of human connection. **Where: Museum of Art & Photography, Infosys Foundation Gallery, Ground floor; When: Opening on March 8**

06 Play time

Prestige Centre for Performing Arts is presenting Chuguru, its first Kannada Theatre Festival. The festival will feature six original productions by prominent theatre groups from Bengaluru, providing a platform for fresh narratives and creative storytelling. **Where: Prestige Centre for Performing Arts, Konanakunte; When: March 7 to 9 and 14 to 16, 3.30 pm and 7.30 pm**

Most-wanted chain snatchers nabbed

Cases against former classmates in 33 police stations

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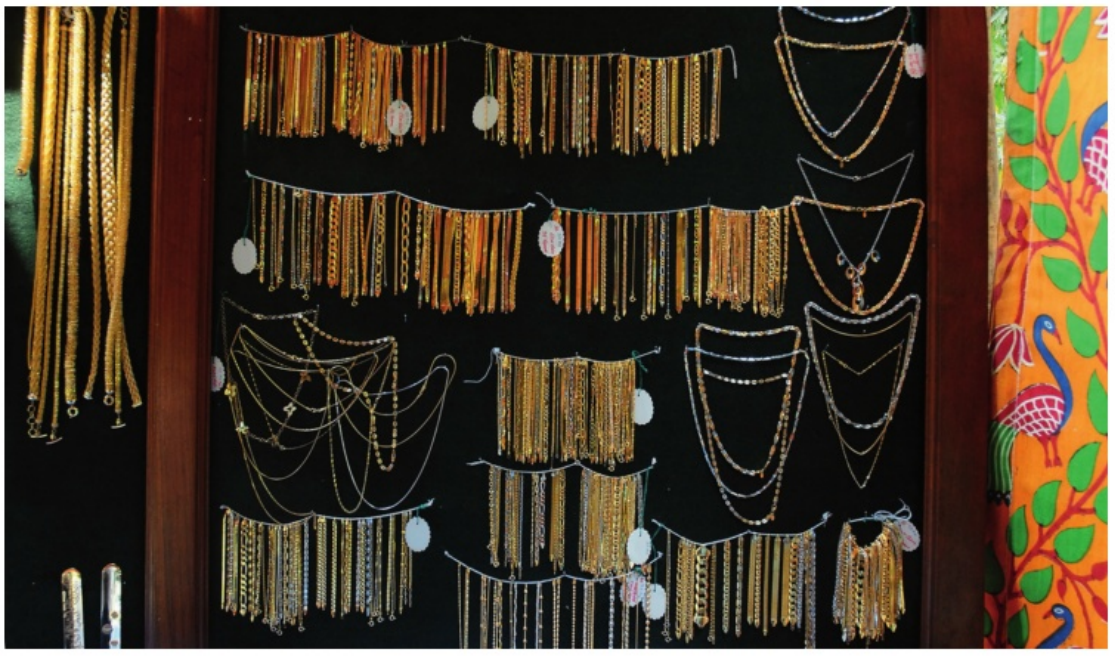
Police have arrested two notorious rowdy sheeters, classmates-turned-criminals, who had been absconding for years despite multiple warrants against them. The duo, involved in a spree of chain-snatching and other criminal activities across the city, was finally nabbed from a hotel in Frazer Town on February 21 after an extensive search operation.



PIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Classmates-turned-criminals

The accused, identified as Mohammad Zaibuddin (39) and Mohammad Mehtab (34), were college classmates who studied B.Com together before turning to crime. Over the years, they established a network of criminal activities, specialising in chain-snatching, robbery, and dealing in stolen property. To evade arrest, they frequently changed residences and stayed in hotels, making it difficult for authorities to track them.

Long criminal histories

Zaibuddin, a resident of Lakshmi Layout, Arakere, Bannerghatta Road, has a staggering 73 cases registered against him across 33 police stations in Bengaluru.

He faces 36 non-bailable arrest warrants and 16 proclamation warrants, primarily related to theft, robbery, and other criminal offenses. Jayanagar Police Station alone has 16 cases registered against him.

His associate, Mohammad Mehtab, a resident of Jayanagar 4th Block, has 31 cases across 12 police stations. He faces 19 non-bailable arrest warrants and 11 proclamation warrants. Both had been previously arrested under Sections 392 (Robbery) and 413 (Habitually Dealing in Stolen Property) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) but managed to secure bail and later went underground, ignoring repeated court summons.

Police say they were college drop-outs who turned to chain-snatching in 2014 to fund a luxurious lifestyle. From 2014-2023, there were 73 cases against them

Tip-off leads to arrest

Acting on a tip-off, the Jayanagar police launched a well-coordinated operation and traced these rowdy-sheeters to a hotel in Frazer Town. The duo was taken into custody on February 21 and produced before the court the next day.

Authorities are now probing their wider network and involvement in other crimes. Given their history of absconding, the police are also considering further legal measures to prevent them from securing bail again.

"The duo were college dropouts who turned to chain-snatching in 2014 to fund a luxurious lifestyle. Between 2014 and 2023, a total of 73 chain-snatching cases were registered against them before they went absconding.

Based on a tip-off, we tracked and apprehended these two rowdy sheeters, who were 'wanted' in 33 police stations," said a police official.

Woman crushed to death by BMTC bus

A 53-year-old woman died after a BMTC bus ran over her, leaving her with severe injuries, around 7:30 pm near Hebbal.

Police officials said the woman was either attempting to board or cross near the bus stand when the accident took place. She was immediately rushed to hospital for medical attention but succumbed to her injuries on the way. **BMB**

2 killed as auto gets sandwiched between BMTC buses

An autorickshaw driver and a passenger lost their lives after their vehicle was crushed between two BMTC buses on Friday morning near Sita Circle in Hanumantha Nagar. The incident occurred around 11.35 am on 80 ft Road near Hosakerehalli Cross. According to eyewitnesses, a BMTC bus from Sita Circle was moving slowly as a car in front was reversing. The autorickshaw, following the bus, stopped. But, another BMTC bus, reportedly speeding, rammed into the auto from behind, pushing it forward into the stationary bus ahead.

The deceased have been identified as Anil Kumar, the autorickshaw driver and a resident of KP Agrahara, and Vishnu Bhapat, an 80-year-old Ayurvedic doctor from Hanumantha Nagar. Bhapat had recently celebrated his birthday, and his son, who had traveled from the US for the occasion, had left for America just the night before the tragedy. Both buses have been seized. **BMB**

Major inter-state vehicle theft racket busted

In one of the biggest vehicle theft recoveries in recent times, the police have busted an inter-state two-wheeler theft racket, seizing 100 stolen vehicles worth Rs 1.45 crore. The breakthrough came after the KR Pura police arrested a key suspect, who later confessed to stealing and distributing vehicles across Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana.

The case began with a complaint lodged by a resident of Gayatri Layout under KR Pura Police Station limits on January 10. The complainant reported that their two-wheeler, parked outside their residence, had been stolen overnight. Acting on intelligence gathered during the investigation, the police apprehended a suspect near the Hoskote toll plaza on February 6, with the stolen two-wheeler.

According to the police the accused is from Andhra Pradesh who was living in the city working as a mechanic before he started stealing two wheelers.

Upon interrogation, the accused revealed a vast network of vehicle thefts spanning multiple states. Following his statements, the police launched coordinated recoveries of all the 100 vehicles in a span of two weeks from the city and also from the parts of Andhra Pradesh. The accused's arrest led to the detection of 51 two-wheeler theft cases across multiple police jurisdictions, including, KR Pura (23 cases), Ramamurthy Nagar (2 cases), Avalahalli (1 case), Kolar Town (1 case), Tirupati East, Renugonta, Raichoty, and several others. The tracing of the owners of the remaining 49 recovered vehicles is underway.

Bengaluru Police Commissioner announced a Rs 50,000 reward to KR Pura Police Station.

Man arrested for two-wheeler theft

The Basavanagudi police have arrested a man for stealing two-wheelers, recovering seven stolen vehicles worth Rs 2.05 lakh. The case was registered after a complaint on February 20, when a two-wheeler parked near a park was stolen. Acting on a tip-off, police apprehended the accused near Nagasandra Circle the same day with the stolen vehicle. Upon interrogation, he confessed to stealing multiple two-wheelers. **BMB**

Police crackdown on drug peddlers, multiple arrests and seizures

Police have intensified their crackdown on drug peddling, arresting multiple individuals in separate operations and seizing significant quantities of ganja and MDMA, along with vehicles and mobile phones used in the crimes.

The Mahadevapura police arrested a man from Odisha who was attempting to sell 5.2 kg of ganja near a railway track in Singayyanapalya. Acting on a tip-off, police apprehended him on February 20, and recovered one mobile phone along with the narcotics, worth Rs 2 lakh. The accused admitted to purchasing the drugs at a lower price and reselling them at a higher rate. He was produced in court the same day and remanded to judicial custody.

Man caught selling MDMA near veterinary hospital

On February 19, the Cottonpet police arrested a drug peddler near a veterinary hospital, seizing 30 grams of MDMA worth Rs 60,000. The accused confessed to procuring the synthetic drug from Kerala and selling it at an inflated price. He was remanded to judicial custody on February 20.

In another operation, the Upparapet police arrested three individuals involved in peddling 14 kg of Ganja near the KSRTC Terminal-1 bus parking lot.

The raid, conducted on February 18, led to the seizure of two two-wheelers used in the illegal trade, with the total value of the seized items estimated at Rs 7 lakh. The Kalasipalya police arrested two individuals near Tippu Armoury for selling MDMA and ganja on February 25.

The operation resulted in the seizure of 9 grams of MDMA, 1.55 kg of ganja, and a two-wheeler, collectively valued at Rs 1.62 lakh. **BMB**

BDA deadlines under scrutiny

24-month plan raises questions as KG Layout site owners demand faster execution and accountability

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BANGALORE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
T. Chowdaiah Road, Kumara Park West, Bengaluru - 560020.
No: BDA/EE-NPKL/work_TN-67/2024-25 Date: 05-02-2025
INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT) - (SHORT TERM)
(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)
The Executive Engineer, NPKL Division, Bangalore Development Authority (BDA), Bengaluru, on behalf of the Commissioner, Bangalore Development Authority, Bengaluru, invites item rate tenders from eligible contractor registered as Class-1 Contractors or equivalent KPWD / BDA / NH / MES / Railways for the Works detailed below.
Name of the work: "Improvement and Development of 9 mtr, 12mtr & 15mtr Internal Roads in Remaining Block's at NPK Layout by Soil Stabilisation Method. Indent No: BDA/2024-25/RD/Work_INDENT67, Approximated Cost Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs): 15992.07, EMD Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 159.92 (Rs. 1.00 Lakh will be as per E-Procurement Portal & Balance Amount is in the form of Bank Guarantee / FDR). Tender Processing Fee (in Rs.): As per e-Procurement Portal. Period of Completion: 24 Months (Including Monsoon).
File photo of KG Layout; Inset: Copy of the tender on Feb 5 where the completion timeline for asphalting work is given as 24 months

"There is no need for 24 months to complete asphalting. There is no guarantee BDA won't have a new story at the end of that time – Surya Kiran, forum head

The Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) continues to make headlines over delays in Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout. It first drew attention for repeatedly missing deadlines to complete developmental works. More recently, it was in the news when Rajajinagar MLA S Suresh Kumar, a member of the State Legislature's Petitions Committee, walked out of a meeting in protest against the BDA's justification for the delays.

Now, the BDA is back in the news, this time for floating a tender on February 5, inviting bidders for the improvement and development of 9-metre, 12-metre, and 15-metre internal roads in the remaining blocks of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout using the soil stabilizing method. The project is valued at ₹15,992.07 lakh, with a completion timeline of 24 months, including the monsoon period.

If the tender notification is any indication, the BDA is expected to complete the asphalting of roads in Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout only after two years. However, given the BDA's history of seeking extensions for developmental works, there is no assurance that contractors will complete the asphalting within the stipulated 24-month timeframe.

The time period given to the contractors to complete asphalting work has made people who bought sites at the layout and are planning to construct their dream and sweet homes. They said that some of the site owners have constructed houses at the layout but are suffering a lot due to lack of basic amenities.

Surya Kiran, spokesperson for the Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Layout Open Forum, stated that asphalting work in Block 5A to I Sector has yet to begin even after a year, while many roads in Blocks 6 and 7 also remain unpaved. "The 24-month timeline contradicts the BDA higher ups claim that 80 per cent of the work is completed. The BDA officials complain some people who bought 20x30 ft sites are misleading even though infrastructure is available. If 80 % of the infrastructure is already in place, a few months are needed to complete testing, rectification, and asphalting. There is no need for 24 months to complete the asphalting works. There is no guarantee of BDA not coming up with a new story at the end of 24 months," said Kiran.

A site owner, on the condition of anonymity, has said that awarding such a huge work to a single bidder is a flawed strategy. "Dividing the project into six packages would not only involve multiple agencies but also ensure completion of the work on time," he said.

Meanwhile, BDA Executive Engineer Ashok CN expressed confidence that contractors would complete the asphalting work within six months. "We allotted 24 months based on the scale of work, but the contractors can complete it within six months," he said.

Will the asphalting works complete in six months? The site owners at NPKL have to wait and watch since the BDA is known for seeking extensions to complete developmental works.

Commission urged to ban gambling sites

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

some extreme cases, taking their own lives due to financial distress.

Shivakumar has urged the Commission to take immediate action to ban all forms of digital gambling, stating that they are causing irreparable harm to society. He argued that the gambling industry, under the guise of entertainment, is turning citizens into compulsive gamblers, leading to economic and mental health crises in families across the state.

We spoke to Shivakumar to understand the concerns. "There are approximately 13 companies that develop online gambling apps. Their advertisements resemble a scenario where a kidnapper demands ransom, and the victim responds, 'Give me five minutes, I'll pay you.' This implies that money can be generated instantly, devaluing hard-earned income. Driven by greed, some individuals invest all their earnings into gambling, only to lose it within minutes. This trend poses serious risks for the future—auto rickshaw drivers neglect their duties to gamble on their phones, and from IT professionals to even young children have started playing, significantly impacting lives," he told BM.

Hundreds to thousands of people are addicted to online gambling, and many take their own lives when they are unable to repay their debts — BM Shivakumar, complainant

Recognising the gravity of the complaint, the KSHRC has sent a copy of the complaint to the Additional Chief Secretaries of the Home Administration Department. The Commission has instructed them to submit a detailed report within a fortnight, outlining their findings and recommendations for potential regulatory action against online gambling platforms.

Shivakumar said that during the Belagavi Assembly session, several ministers opposed the claims, stating that only six individuals had died by suicide due to the devastating effects of online rummy, five of whom were from Bengaluru. "However, the reality is far more alarming—hundreds to thousands of people are addicted to online gambling, and many take their own lives when they are unable to repay their debts. Parents involved in gambling risk destroying their children's future, while young people who fall into this trap jeopardise their own future, leaving their families to live in constant fear."

Police data

According to police data in the previous year, nine cases were reported, leading to the arrest of 16 individuals. In a separate operation, the CCB conducted raids targeting video game and online poker gambling, exposing illegal activities. Four raids resulted in the arrest of 41 individuals and the seizure of Rs 2.50 lakh.

On February 19th, students from Government First Grade College, Kengeri, along with MLA Somashekhar, staged a protest against online gambling. Shivakumar said gambling has existed since ancient times—back in the Mahabharata, they even staked Draupadi as a bet.

"It has always been a serious issue. Earlier, people would hide to gamble, but now they play openly, even in the presence of the police, as they have lost all fear. Unlike traditional street gambling like Andar Bahar, which at least made people run when caught, online gambling is easily concealed, making it even more dangerous."

Next hearing

The next hearing in the case has been scheduled for March 21, where the Commission is expected to review the government's response and decide on further proceedings. The outcome of this inquiry is likely to have significant implications for the future of online gambling laws in the state. Shivakumar questioned the reported figures, asking, "When so many are addicted and dying by suicide, how can there be only five deaths in a year?" He said that a detailed report is expected by March 13.

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Road danger

Jayanagar

Construction debris at the Jayanagar 4th Block, junction is forcing pedestrians onto the busy road.

Uneven path

Varthur

A dug-up road at Madhuranagar 3rd Stage, Varthur, Whitefield, is causing inconvenience, especially at the turn.

Unresolved issue

Kalkere Junction

The road near Kalkere Junction is in a pathetic condition, with no action from authorities, leaving commuters frustrated.

Bengalureans flock to farmlands near Mysuru for a tranquil escape

PICTURE FOR REPRESENTATION ONLY

As Bengaluru's urban chaos intensifies, more city dwellers are turning to farmlands near Mysuru as a retreat from the hustle and bustle. The trend of investing in weekend villages, valley farms, and hill-view estates has surged, offering not just agricultural opportunities but also premium leisure facilities like clubhouses, cottages, swimming pools, playgrounds, meditation halls, and gyms.

For many, these farmlands serve as a second home—an escape from the stress of city life while doubling as an investment. The concept of "weekend farming" has gained traction, with Bengaluru residents preferring to own a slice of nature just a couple of hours away from their primary residence. Mysuru, known for its pleasant climate and well-connected road network, has become a prime choice.

Why Mysuru?

Raje Gowda, a realtor, said, "Mysuru's farmlands offer a unique combination of affordability, accessibility, and modern amenities. Unlike traditional farmland, these properties come with well-planned infrastructure, allowing buyers to enjoy both agricultural pursuits and a luxurious countryside lifestyle. Developers have transformed these lands into holistic weekend destinations, providing everything from organic farming spaces to adventure sports and wellness retreats."

Ramesh Kumar, a tech entrepreneur from Whitefield who recently purchased a three-acre farmland, shared his experience: "I wanted a place where my family could unwind over the weekends without leaving Karnataka. The farmhouse we built here is surrounded by lush greenery, and we get to grow our own organic produce. It's a rewarding experience, both emotionally and financially."

Similarly, Priya Shetty, a marketing professional from Indiranagar, invested in a valley farm near Nanjangud. "I was looking for a property that offered more than just farming. The place I chose comes with a clubhouse, a swimming pool, and a meditation hall. It's perfect for weekend getaways and also has a good appreciation value," she says.

Growing Demand and Rising Value

Real estate experts highlight that the demand for such curated farmlands has significantly increased post-pandemic, as people seek healthier lifestyles and work-from-home options. The prices of farm plots have seen a steady rise, with many investors already witnessing substantial appreciation. Properties that were available for 10-15 lakh per acre a few years ago now range between 25-40 lakh, depending on location and amenities.

According to Ravi Shankar, a real estate consultant, "Earlier, farmlands were bought purely for agricultural purposes, but today, developers are packaging them with lifestyle amenities. This has attracted a new wave of buyers—corporates, IT professionals, and NRIs—who see it as both an investment and a retreat. These farm communities not only promote sustainable living but also foster a sense of community. Many projects encourage organic farming, animal husbandry, and eco-friendly practices, allowing residents to reconnect with nature. Some developments even offer workshops on farming, yoga, and wellness, making them ideal for those looking for a balanced lifestyle."

–Prakash VL

City of flexible office space

Bengaluru leads the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region in flexible office space, boasting 15.5 million sq. ft., surpassing Shanghai, Seoul, and Tokyo, according to CBRE's 'H1 2024 Asia Pacific Flexible Office Market' report. Delhi NCR follows with 10.7 million sq. ft., highlighting India's dominance in the sector.

Delhi NCR recorded a 26% growth in flexible office stock since 2023, the highest among surveyed cities. Hyderabad (6.8 million sq. ft.) and Mumbai (6.1 million sq. ft.) also ranked in the top 10. The APAC region's total flexible office stock reached 89 million sq. ft. in June 2024, growing 3.9% since 2023, with nearly 3,000 flex space centres.

Anshuman Magazine, Chairman & CEO of CBRE India, noted that India's demand for managed solutions is driving growth. Henry Chin, CBRE APAC's Head of Research, added that operators now focus on income diversification and sustainable business models post-COVID.

The report highlights that APAC's flexible office market is expanding more sustainably than the pre-COVID boom. Covering 20 key markets, including Japan, China, South Korea, and Australia, the study underscores India's significant role in shaping the region's workspace evolution.

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Development goals: K'taka yet to bridge 25% gap

State lags in key Development Goals, struggling with hunger, education, and gender equality despite progress in health and clean energy; urgent action is needed

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2 ZERO HUNGER
4 QUALITY EDUCATION
5 GENDER EQUALITY
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
9 INDUSTRY INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

(File photo) Assessment urges urgent action on SDGs, especially gender equality (SDG 5)

Time is running out for Karnataka to achieve its 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development. An in-depth analysis of sustainable development goals (SDGs) by the Center for Science and Environment (CSE), New Delhi, reveals that Karnataka is still lagging behind in multiple key targets.

The state has performed well in certain SDGs, scoring 80 in 'Good Health and Well-being,' 90 in 'Clean Water and Sanitation,' and a perfect 100 in 'Affordable and Clean Energy.' Other notable scores include 86 in 'Decent Work and Economic Growth,' 69 in 'Reduced Inequalities,' 85 in 'Sustainable Cities and Communities,' 73 in 'Climate Action,' 77 in 'Life Below Water,' and 81 in 'Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.'

However, Karnataka is struggling in critical areas such as 'Zero Hunger' (56), 'Quality Education' (63), 'Gender Equality' (51), and 'Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure' (62). A score of 100 indicates that the target has been met, while 0 signifies little to no progress.

Overall, Karnataka has failed to reach even half of the target in 25 out of the 108 assessed indicators (23%) across 16 SDGs.

The report is based on three key data sources: India's global standing is drawn from the "Sustainable Development Report 2024," published by Dublin University;

India's state-wise performance is based on the "SDG Index 2023-24," released by NITI Aayog in July 2024; Projected population data comes from the "Report of the Technical Group on Population Projections 2011-2036," published in July 2020 by the National Commission on Population under the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

This assessment evaluates both Karnataka's progress across 16 SDGs and its performance against 108 indicators.

Karnataka's SDG progress uneven: While excelling in health and clean energy, the state lags in hunger, education, and gender equality, raising concerns for 2030 targets

India's overall scenario

Globally, India lags behind the world average in nine out of 16 SDGs, underscoring the challenges in meeting sustainable development targets.

Among India's 36 states and union territories, all have achieved at least half of the target in only four SDGs: 'Good Health and Well-being' (SDG 3), 'Clean Water and Sanitation' (SDG 6), 'Affordable and Clean Energy' (SDG 7), and 'Decent Work and Economic Growth' (SDG 8). 'Life Below Water' (SDG 14) has been excluded as it applies only to coastal states.

The assessment highlights the need for urgent action on SDGs over the next five years, particularly in addressing gender equality (SDG 5), where India performs the worst. The country lags significantly in all eight key parameters under this goal. The sex ratio at birth remains skewed at 929 females per 1,000 male births, while spousal violence affects 29.2% of married women, highlighting deep-rooted societal challenges. Economic empowerment of women is another concern, with wage disparity, poor workplace representation, and only 13.96% of landholdings owned by women.

Due to these issues, 14 states and UTs score poorly (0-49 out of 100), while another 17 fall in the marginal range of 50-64.

Governor returns 2 bills, tussle continues

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The ongoing tussle between the Karnataka government and the Governor's office has escalated further, as Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot has returned two crucial cooperative sector amendment bills to the state government for the second time. In a strong move, the Governor has not only rejected the bills but has also raised serious objections regarding the government's intent behind these amendments.

Sources indicate that the bills in question—The Karnataka Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Act, 2024, and The Karnataka Souharda Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Act, 2024—were passed in both houses of the state legislature during the Belagavi session in December 2023. However, Governor Gehlot, dissatisfied with the government's explanations and clarifications, has once again sent them back.

What do the bills propose?

The amendments sought to increase the number of government-nominated members in cooperative societies and grant them voting rights. According to the government, the objective was to provide representation to marginalised communities within cooperative societies and bring more structure to the system. Additionally, the bill proposed abolishing the Cooperative Election Authority and transferring its responsibilities to the Registrar of Cooperative Societies.

> **Granting voting rights to nominated members undermines democratic values and threatens the autonomy of cooperative societies.**
>
> –Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot

Governors objections

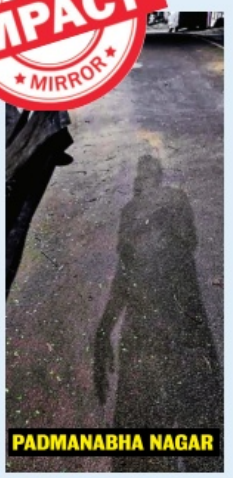
Governor Gehlot has raised serious concerns about these provisions, arguing that increasing the number of government-nominated members and granting them voting rights goes against democratic principles and could weaken the autonomy of cooperative societies. He has also objected to the proposal to dissolve the Cooperative Election Authority, contending that it would place an unnecessary burden on the cooperative sector. Furthermore, he has expressed concerns about the Karnataka Souharda Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill, which seeks to extend government control over cooperative institutions.

Root of the conflict

The friction between the Raj Bhavan and the Siddaramaiah-led government dates back to September 2023. At the time, Governor Gehlot had directed the government to submit the Justice HS Kempanna report related to the Arkavathy Layout land allocation case from Siddaramaiah's previous tenure as Chief Minister. However, the Cabinet decided not to share any documents or details with the Raj Bhavan without prior approval. This decision led to a complete communication breakdown between the state government and the Governor's office for the past five months. The government has consistently ignored the Governor's requests for clarifications on various policy decisions.

News that brings real change

BANGALORE IMPACT MIRROR



Bangalore Mirror continues to be the voice of its readers, ensuring that civic issues are addressed swiftly. Time and again, city officials have responded to reports in the newspaper, proving that Bangalore Mirror is not just about news but about making a real difference.

Recently, the footpath near Suguna Hospital was fixed immediately after the issue was highlighted. In Padmanabhanagar, garbage that had been piling up for weeks on 14th Main, 10th Cross, was cleared within an hour of Bangalore Mirror posting a picture. At Abbigere Park, dried leaves were cleaned up the next morning after a reader's complaint was reported. Meanwhile, the Railway Parallel Road in Sahakaranagar, used as an illegal dumping ground for three years, was finally cleared following a report.

These instances reaffirm that Bangalore Mirror listens to its readers and serves as a bridge between citizens and civic agencies, ensuring problems are resolved without delay.

Jewellery bill helps trace owner

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) at Sir M Visvesvaraya Terminal (SMVB) successfully traced the owner of a bag containing valuables worth 2.4 lakh and returned it after tracking him down through a jewellery shop receipt.

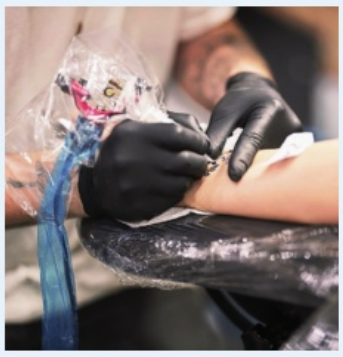
According to sources, on Wednesday, a coach attendant conducting a routine check on an arriving train at SMVB discovered an unattended bag containing an iPad and cash. The matter was reported to the on-duty railway staff, and the bag was subsequently taken to the RPF post at Baiyappanahalli (BYPL) for verification.

The following day, RPF personnel conducted an internal search of the bag for any clues to identify the owner. While a flight boarding pass dated February 12 was found inside, the airline was unable to share passenger details due to privacy policies. However, a receipt from GRT Jewellery, which included a contact number, provided a crucial lead. Upon reaching out, officials confirmed that the bag belonged to an individual from Chennai.

After verifying the contents, the owner requested that the bag be handed over to his cousin. Under proper acknowledgement, the RPF returned the bag. –BMB

Toxic tattoo ink raises health alarms

Food Safety and Drug Administration officials have also raised alarms over hazardous tattoo ink available in the market. Samples tested contained 22 heavy metals, including selenium, chromium, platinum, and arsenic, which pose severe health risks. The ink is not covered under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act and lacks Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) regulations. Health experts warn that these toxic substances and microorganisms can enter the body through tattoos, leading to skin diseases, and bacterial, viral, and fungal infections. Authorities have urged the Central Government to establish BIS standards for tattoo inks to prevent potential health hazards.



Samples revealed 22 toxic metals, including arsenic

Crackdown on illegal sale of antibiotics

In a statewide crackdown on drug misuse, Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao revealed that 52 medical shops were found selling antibiotics without valid prescriptions. The special drive, conducted between February 17 and 19, targeted the unauthorised sale of antibiotics across medical stores. Investigations are ongoing, and legal proceedings will be initiated against the offenders.

Massive violations uncovered in drive

Rao said, "A similar enforcement operation in January led to the inspection of 488 medical shops. Authorities issued 400 show-cause notices, suspended 231 licenses, and cancelled three licenses for rule violations under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act."

State explores seaplane services at heritage sites

Will Karnataka get its first seaplane service? The State government is considering launching seaplane services in select locations across the state in the coming days. Law, Parliamentary Affairs, and Tourism Minister HK Patil said that the government is currently exploring the feasibility of seaplane services at KRS (Krishna Raja Sagara), Alamatti Reservoir, Hampi, Badami, and Gol Gumbaz. Discussions are underway to assess their viability, the minister revealed.

"Karnataka is a land of rich cultural heritage and natural wonders. The state has several historically significant sites that need to be brought to the forefront. These places can be considered 'tourism gems' that deserve greater visibility," Patil added.

Patil said that Karnataka expects to welcome around 10 million domestic tourists and 100,000 international tourists in the coming years. "The tourism sector is projected to generate 2,750 crore in economic activity and significantly boost employment opportunities. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has allocated 1,500 crore to the tourism sector, with a target investment of 8,000 crore, promising a major boost for industry stakeholders. The Karnataka government is also leveraging 3D hologram technology to digitally document historical sites and temples in North Karnataka, including the Bahmani-era Karez (underground water tunnel) in Bidar," Patil added.

Bengaluru's steamy affair with plastic idlis

Despite plastic ban, many hotels in city are using plastic sheets to steam idlis, exposing customers to harmful chemicals and serious health risks

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Experts urge replacing plastic sheets with banana leaves for food packaging, promoting health & tradition

> "The state government will issue an order banning the use of plastic sheets in food production centres within the next two days. During inspections conducted across 251 hotels in Karnataka, officials found that 52 establishments were using plastic sheets in the steaming process of idlis. Thin plastic sheets, especially polythene covers, are extremely hazardous. Earlier, hotels used cotton cloth for steaming idlis. However, it has come to our attention that many hotels have replaced cloth with plastic sheets. Hence, our officials conducted inspections and collected samples."
> **—Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao**

> "In our hotels, we are not using plastic covers. We are using non-plastic plates. In some of the hotels, clothes are being used."
> **PC Rao, Honorary President, Bruhat Bengaluru Hotel Association**

Despite a ban on plastic, it's being sold and used everywhere—but the bigger threat is the "plastic idlis" being served across Bengaluru. In a city where idlis are a staple, concerns are growing as many hotels are using plastic sheets to steam idlis, which can have serious health risks.

In fact, many hotels across the city are found using plastic sheets to line idli steam plates, exposing customers to harmful cancer-causing chemicals at temperatures over 100°C. Despite this, local authorities seem to be turning a blind eye. While people enjoy their idlis unaware, they may actually be consuming dangerous substances that could lead to long-term health problems.

Plastic idli hazard

Sources said that the steam needed to cook idlis exceeds 100°C, which causes toxic chemicals from the plastic sheets to leach into the food. Traditionally, cotton cloth is used to steam idlis, but to avoid the hassle of washing, many hotels have switched to plastic sheets. Some are even going to the extent of covering both the idli plates and the dough with plastic to save time and energy, significantly increasing the health risks.

Plastic packaging woes

Beyond steaming, plastic sheets are widely used to pack food items in hotels. Experts suggest using alternatives like banana leaves, which not only provide health benefits but also support farmers. Consuming food on banana leaves is a part of India's rich tradition, and using them could help curb the growing plastic menace.

The silent killer

According to international chemical research centres, consuming food cooked or served on plastic can lead to over 52 types of cancer. Even more alarming is the fact that harmful chemicals from plastic packaging can enter the body when reheating or eating hot food stored in plastic containers.

Dr K Krishna Murthy, a general physician said, "The use of plastic sheets during the steaming of food, particularly idlis, poses a serious and largely underestimated health risk. When plastic is exposed to high temperatures, especially beyond 100°C, it begins to release harmful chemicals like phthalates, dioxins, and bisphenol-A (BPA). These substances are known endocrine disruptors and are linked to a variety of health conditions, including hormone imbalances, reproductive issues, and cancers. Even trace amounts of these chemicals can have cumulative effects on the body over time, leading to severe health consequences. The worst part is that these toxins are invisible to the naked eye, making consumers unaware that their daily consumption of what they consider healthy food is toxic. Regularly ingesting these chemicals, particularly in something as staple as idlis, can gradually poison the body, leading to long-term effects like immune system damage, metabolic disorders, and developmental problems in children. The use of plastic during food preparation should be strictly prohibited, and we need to raise more awareness about the hidden dangers of this practice."

Time for action

Proactive hotel owners who genuinely care about their customers' health have already switched back to using cotton cloth for steaming idlis. It's high time others follow suit and completely abandon the dangerous practice of using plastic in food preparation. Previous Food Safety Measures

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has already banned carcinogenic artificial food colours in cotton candy, Manchurian, kebabs, and the flavoured water used in pani puri. The message is clear: the everyday idli may seem tasty, but when steamed with plastic, it could turn into a health disaster.

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORYBEHINDTHEPHOTO

DASH OF COLOUR

A multi-coloured kingfisher set against an azure sky seen somewhere in Hampi

The picture was clicked by reader **A Avani**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

All roads lead to IISc today

Open Day 2025 from 9 am to 5 pm: Enriching experience for students, educators, science enthusiasts in store

The prestigious Indian Institute of Science (IISc), known for its cutting-edge research in science and technology, is generally off-limits to the public. However, for one day each year, visitors get a unique opportunity to explore the institute, witness scientific exhibitions, conduct experiments, and engage in discussions with leading scientists. This year, IISc's 'Open Day 2025' will be held on March 1, from 9 am to 5 pm, offering an enriching experience to students, educators, and science enthusiasts.

Demonstrations, quizzes, poster presentations and scientific competitions are planned

Why is Open Day celebrated?

Open Day is organised every year on the first Saturday of March to commemorate the birth anniversary of Jamsetji Tata, the founder of IISc, who was born on March 3, 1839. The event aims to spread awareness about science and encourage scientific curiosity among young minds. The tradition of Open Day dates back to the 1970s, and it attracts thousands of visitors annually.

Explore over 42 departments and research centres

IISc houses 42 departments and interdisciplinary research centers, including Electronics and Computer Science, Mechanical Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Microbiology and Cell Biology, and Biological and Genetic Studies. Visitors can explore any department to learn about ongoing experiments and interact with researchers.

Workshops, demonstrations & competitions

Open Day features lectures, hands-on demonstrations, poster presentations, quizzes, and scientific competitions across different departments. Special activities are also designed for young students to ignite their interest in science and technology.

Registration & entry details

Entry to Open Day is free, but educational institutions and individuals are encouraged to register at openday.iisc.ac.in. Walk-in visitors are also welcome.

No vehicle entry inside IISc campus

Public vehicles will not be allowed inside the IISc campus. However, electric vehicles will be available to assist senior citizens, pregnant women, and differently-abled visitors. Help desks will also be set up to guide attendees. Notably, Aadhaar or ID proof is not required for entry. — **BMB**

Visitors at Open Day 2024 in IISc campus (file photo)

DID YOU KNOW?

Scientists say they've cracked the code for boiling the perfect egg. The perfect boiled egg has a velvety yolk paired with a soft, solid white. Achieving this balance can be a challenge because the yolk cooks at a lower temperature than the white. Hard boiling an egg can yield a chalky yolk, while cooking low and slow can produce jelly-like, undercooked whites. Researchers cooked hundreds of eggs and used math to tackle this runny conundrum. One equation dealt with how heat travels between a hot surface and an egg; another captured how the egg's contents morph from liquid to solid with a gel-like state in between. Their final recipe involves transferring eggs in a steamer basket every two minutes between two bowls of water — one boiling and the other lukewarm at 86 degrees Fahrenheit (30 degrees Celsius) — for a total of 32 minutes before cooling under running water and peeling. In the method proposed by the researchers, dubbed periodic cooking, the egg whites heated and cooled until fully set. The yolk, on the other hand, held firm at a constant temperature and cooked until creamy. — **AP**

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Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

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Women can't maintain abs for long as they need fat

CLAIM: Women's bodies need fat stores to maintain healthy hormone production. **FACT:** True. Women need body fat for hormone production, and very low body fat levels can disrupt menstrual cycles and overall health. Maintaining abs can risk hormonal imbalances.

Speaking on a podcast, actress Tanishaa Mukerji claimed that women can't maintain abs for a long time as fat is very important in their body. "Fat creates estrogen production (sic)," Mukerji said, sharing her experiences with weight loss. She continued: "A man can go down to 14% body fat, for a woman that is very low. .. We have 36,000 hormones in our body. We are baby producers." Mukherjee also mentioned that women can't be on a low carb diet indefinitely as their brain and body need carbs. "I was on a low carb diet indefinitely, no sugar. I was having a protein shake, which was whey protein," she said. "You can't take that indefinitely, your liver gets exhausted." The podcast has 10,9000 views and nearly 2 thousand likes.

A YouTube short featuring the claim from the podcast has 97,000 views and 2,500 likes. On Instagram, the video posted as a reel has received more engagement with over 22 thousand likes and over 11,77000 views. The channel @hauterrfly that owns "The Male Feminist" podcast, has a reach of over 450000 followers.

Do women need fat? We investigate

Dr. Anjana Bhan, a senior consultant and endocrinologist at Max Healthcare, New Delhi agrees with Mukherjee, emphasizing the crucial role of body fat in women's health, particularly in hormone production and reproductive functions.

"Fat is definitely important but neither too little or not too much within the normal context," she explained. "For women, the ideal body fat percentage typically ranges between 25-31% for adults aged 40-60 years. This percentage isn't arbitrary – it serves vital biological functions." Dr Bhan highlighted that women's bodies undergo various stages in life: "There is a premenopausal or rather a pubertal stage, then a reproductive stage, and then a post-menopausal stage." According to her, women typically maintain a "gynecoid body frame" or "pear body frame," during reproductive years, with healthy subcutaneous fat distributed under the skin, particularly in the buttocks and breast areas.

"This distribution is actually beneficial. This is actually healthy fat," Dr Bhan said. "Other than maybe joint problems that people face if there is a lot of subcutaneous fat or the worry that you don't look good, fat is not bad fat."

The endocrinologist cautioned against the dangers of extreme dieting considering the body's need for fat.

"Athletes and exercise freaks attempt to eliminate all body fat. This can lead to functional amenorrhea, a condition which causes delayed or missed periods, where hormone production is disrupted due to insufficient fat and cholesterol levels," she highlighted. "If there is less fat and less cholesterol, these hormones are not made and they go into metabolic disarray." Dr. Bhan advocated moderation when it comes to ketogenic and very low-carb diets. "If you continue it chronically you will have fat loss," she said. "This can lead to less production of cholesterol, less production of hormones, and menstrual irregularities." Instead, Dr. Bhan recommended a balanced approach to nutrition, suggesting that "people should have about 50 to 60% carbohydrate in their diet." The message from Dr. Bhan's insights is clear: women's bodies need adequate fat stores for optimal health and hormone function. Rather than viewing fat as an enemy, we should understand its role in maintaining our overall well-being. The goal isn't to eliminate fat but to maintain healthy levels that support our body's complex systems.

The story was originally published by Firstcheck.in (https://firstcheck.in/fact-check-women-cant-maintain-abs-they-need-fat/) and republished by Bangalore Mirror as part of the Shakti Collective

HC slams flawed wildlife probe, frees accused

Court quashes case against man over procedural lapses in wildlife article seizure, citing significant investigation flaws; seized items remain government property

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The Karnataka High Court has nullified legal proceedings against an individual found with prohibited items under the Wild Life (Protection) Act due to investigative procedural flaws.

Justice Hemant Chandangoudar, presiding as a single judge, granted the petition by Pavana Kumar MR, who faced charges under multiple sections of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

According to prosecutors, the Assistant Conservator of Forests issued a search warrant under Section 50(8) after receiving information about the petitioner's unlicensed possession of deer and kangaroo skin.

Following the warrant issued on August 8, 2021, the Range Forest Officer (RFO) searched the petitioner's property and found prohibited items. The RFO subsequently filed a complaint under Section 200 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973.

The Magistrate acknowledged the offences and authorised further investigation by the respondent under Section 50(8). The Assistant Conservator of Forests then investigated and submitted findings on December 20, 2021, confirming the petitioner's unlicensed possession of wildlife articles.

The petitioner contended that authorities issued the search warrant without first registering a case against him for violating the Act's provisions. Additionally, the Assistant Conservator of Forests investigated the Magistrate's cognizance and submitted a final report on December 20, 2021, violating Section 50(8).

Officials raided petitioner for illegally possessing deer skin

Prosecutors argued that case registration before complaint filing was not mandatory, and the Magistrate correctly took cognizance and authorised further investigation. The bench referenced a coordinate bench ruling in CrlP No 10873/2023 (dated November 17, 2023), which established the requirement for a Wildlife Offence Report before issuing search warrants.

The court stated, "In the present case, upon receiving credible information regarding the petitioner's possession of prohibited wildlife articles, the Assistant Conservator of Forests, before issuing a search warrant, was required to register a case in the Wild Life Offences Report (WLOR), as mandated by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau guidelines of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India."

It further noted, "However, in the absence of prior case registration, the entire process, including the filing of the complaint, taking cognizance, and conducting further investigation, stands vitiated, violating Section 50(8) of the Act, 1972."

In granting the petition, it concluded "Given the procedural irregularities and legal infirmities, continuation of criminal proceedings against the petitioner would be unjust and constitute an abuse of process of law."

The court specified that seized articles would remain government property, denying their release to the petitioner.

Nandi Hills ropeway row

The Karnataka High Court has instructed the state administration to address a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) challenging the Nandi Hills ropeway project. The division bench, led by Chief Justice NV Anjaria and MI Arun, scheduled the next hearing for April 8.

Universal Human Rights Services Foundation, a Bengaluru-based organisation, initiated the legal proceedings. The petitioner stated that the government modified specific clauses of the Karnataka Government Forest Preservation Act to assign two acres of land in survey number 3 of the Nandi Hills for establishing the ropeway project's upper terminal point.

The petitioner's counsel highlighted that the Nandi Hills property belonged to the Horticulture Department, which authorised the transfer of two acres to the Tourism Department for 30 years. The initiative aims to reduce travel time to the hills whilst offering visitors panoramic views. The development seeks to enhance accessibility and increase tourist footfall at Nandi Hills.

The petitioner additionally noted that the Nandi Hills area is safeguarded as a garden under the Karnataka Forest Conservation Act. The petitioner contended that implementing the proposed ropeway project would severely damage the Nandi Hills ecosystem.

Bengaluru Film Festival begins today

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Curtains are set to go up on the 16th edition of the Bengaluru International Film Festival on Saturday on the grand stairs of Vidhana Soudha and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will inaugurate the festival. Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar will be the chief guest.

Dr Shivaraj Kumar will release five cinema-related books published by Karnataka Film Academy, along with the festival manual. The event will be graced by a well-known actor and Bengaluru International Film Festival Ambassador Kishore Kumar G. The Polish Institute Director Ms Malgorzta Wejsi-Golebiak, actress Priyanka Mohan and M Narasimhalu, President of Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce will attend the inaugural function.

The festival's film screenings will begin on March 2 across 11 screens at Orion Mall, with additional screenings at Kalavidara Sangha, Dr Rajkumar Bhavan, and Suchitra Film Society. More than 200 films (400 shows) from 60 countries featuring across 15 sections will be screened during the festival. The theme of the film festival is Universal Peace in Diversity. The festival's inaugural film Pyre will be screened at 8 pm.

The organisers have said that 3,000 delegates have already registered. The highlights of the festival are: Discussions on new dimensions of cinema with industry leaders, including OTT sector head Shiju Prabhakaran, Zee Entertainment's Sugata Mukherjee, Sony LIV content head Mukesh R Mehta, and producer-distributor Balwant Singh.

A session on AI in filmmaking, featuring insights from NVidia's head and Whistling Woods technical team will be held. A dedicated panel on women in cinema, featuring actress Ramya and Nandini Reddy and a discussion on the economic landscape of Kannada cinema, covering creative growth, business possibilities, and the feasibility of establishing a producer-friendly Kannada OTT platform will be held.

World Kannada Cinema Day

A special event on March 3 at screen 11, Orion Mall, marks the celebration of World Kannada Cinema Day, honouring the release of the first Kannada talkie, Sati Sulochana.

No power cuts despite rising electricity usage

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As Mercury rises, many homes are switching to fans or ACs to beat the heat. The good news is that the Energy Department has clarified that there won't be any load shedding. Energy Minister KJ Geroge said, "The Energy Department is fully geared to meet the State's energy requirements of 19,000 MW power demand during the upcoming summer months, and there will be no load shedding. Over the past two months, Karnataka has experienced a significant increase in power consumption, leading to an unprecedented demand of 19,000 MW. However, there will be no load shedding, as the State is fully prepared to meet the rising demand during the upcoming summer months. The surge in power consumption is also a positive indicator of broader economic recovery in the State."

He said that Karnataka has sufficient electricity to meet the demand. Apart from occasional power supply interruptions due to local technical issues, load shedding will not be needed. The Energy Minister said farmers' agricultural pump sets will receive 7 hours of electricity, while industrial and household consumers will have a continuous 24-hour supply.

"Compared to last year, the electricity demand has significantly increased. On February 27 of last year, the demand was 16,214 MW, whereas on the same day this year, the demand was 17,874 MW. This demand has been adequately met. Similarly, steps have been taken to ensure that there will be no issues in supplying electricity in the same manner until the first week of June", said Gaurav Gupta, Additional Chief Secretary of the Energy Department, Government of Karnataka.

On Wednesday, 3,300 MW of electricity was generated from KPCL's thermal power stations, 2,000 MW from hydroelectric units, 126 MW from UPCL, 6,655 MW from solar, and 1,940 MW from wind. Additionally, 6,183 MW of electricity was received from CGS (Central Generating Stations), and 600 MW was purchased from the central grid. Electricity was also obtained from Punjab and Uttar Pradesh on an exchange basis, totalling 700 MW. To further meet electricity demand, an additional 310 MW will be sourced starting March 1. Depending on demand, 100 to 1,275 MW will be obtained daily through exchange agreements, and 300 MW will be procured from Punjab. Additionally, 1,000 MW of electricity will be purchased daily until the first week of June.

George added, "While the State is producing more electricity than the current demand, there is no storage facility. To address this, it has been decided to implement storage projects, including a 2000 MW capacity at Sharavathi Pumped Storage, 1600 MW at Varahi Pumped Storage, 1000 MW at Pavagada, and a 2000 MW battery storage project at Ryapte."

Plans to meet demand

In certain substations, electricity demand has spiked, leading to overloading, while in other areas, more electricity is available than needed, causing underload. To address this, priority is being given to the link line system. This system transfers electricity from underloaded substations to those experiencing overload, thereby balancing the power distribution. The establishment of link lines has already been completed in some areas. Although the State has sufficient electricity, the challenge lies in its transmission and distribution.

Do not use IP sets with converters

To ensure 24-hour electricity for domestic use, the state government has launched the 'Niranthara Jyothi' scheme. Under this scheme, single-phase electricity is provided at night to benefit those in farmhouses. However, farmers have been using converters to operate agricultural pump sets during the single-phase supply, which has resulted in power trips and widespread outages. Therefore, Energy Minister KJ George urged that under no circumstances should IP sets be used with converters for single-phase electricity supply.

FINAL CALL

Skype set to shut down in May as Microsoft prioritises Teams

Skype will ring for the last time this May as owner Microsoft retires the two-decade-old internet calling service that redefined how people connect across borders.

Shutting down Skype will help Microsoft focus on its homegrown Teams service by simplifying its communication offerings, the software giant said on Friday.

Founded in 2003, Skype's cheap audio and video calls quickly disrupted the landline industry in the early 2000s and made the company a household name boasting hundreds of millions of users at its peak. But the platform has struggled to keep up with easier-to-use and more reliable rivals such as Zoom and Salesforce's Slack in recent years.

The decline was partly because Skype's underlying technology was not suited for the smartphone era.

When the pandemic and work-from-home fueled the need for online business calls, Microsoft batted for Teams by aggressively integrating it with other Office apps to tap corporate users — once a major base for Skype.

To ease the transition from the platform, its users will be able to log into Teams for free on any supported device using their existing credentials, with chats and contacts migrating automatically.

Skype the latest in a series of high-flying bets that Microsoft has mishandled, such as the Internet Explorer web browser and its Windows Phone

With that, Skype will become the latest in a series of high-flying bets that Microsoft has mishandled, such as the Internet Explorer web browser and its Windows Phone. Other big tech firms have also struggled with online communication tools, with Google making several attempts through apps including Hangouts and Duo.

When Microsoft bought Skype in 2011 for $8.5 billion after outbidding Google and Facebook — its largest deal at the time — the service had about 150 million monthly users; by 2020, that number had fallen to roughly 23 million, despite a brief resurgence during the pandemic.

Microsoft said on Friday "Skype has been an integral part of shaping modern communications".

"We are honored to have been part of the journey."

Reuters

Technicolor India wraps up ops

Technicolor India, the production hub of Paris-headquartered Technicolor Group, has shut down operations in the country, impacting over 3,370 employees, the Times of India has reported.

Technicolor Group built a business providing visual effects, animation and other services to the entertainment and media industries, among others. The company is known for its work on Hollywood films such as Mufasa: The Lion King and Kung Fu Panda.

While Technicolor had announced the shutdown of its US operations on Monday, there was no communication on the closure of its India offices.

As of February 2024, the company had around 3,370 employees in India, according to market research firm Tracxn. Most of them are based in Mumbai and Bengaluru. The company has a global workforce of 10,000.

In a recent town hall, Technicolor India head Biren Ghosh said the company is "financially and operationally not moving forward" and lacks the funding needed to support Technicolor India, delaying salaries and dues.

"We were working with the corporate to release money, with several reminders. In the current circumstances, they do not have funds to give Technicolor India. We haven't received money from the global. So, employees will not be given salaries for February," Ghosh said. **ET Online**

Apple sued over 'carbon neutral' claim for watches

Apple has been sued by consumers who said its claim that three versions of Apple Watches are "carbon neutral" and environmentally friendly is false and misleading.

In a complaint filed on Wednesday in San Jose, California federal court, seven purchasers of the green-tagged Apple Watch Series 9, SE and Ultra 2 said they would not have bought their watches or would have paid less had they known the truth.

Apple, also known for the iPhone, launched the watches in September 2023, saying they would be carbon neutral through a combination of lower emissions and purchases of carbon offsets.

But the plaintiffs--from California, Florida and Washington, D.C.--said two carbon offsetting projects on which Apple relied to meet its corporate emissions target did not provide "genuine" carbon reductions. They said much of the land in Kenya's Chyulu Hills Project lies within a national park protected from deforestation since 1983, while land for China's Guinan Project was heavily covered by trees even before the project began in 2015.

"In both cases, the carbon reductions would have occurred regardless of Apple's involvement or the projects' existence," the complaint said. "Because Apple's carbon neutrality claims are predicated on the efficacy and legitimacy of these projects, Apple's carbon neutrality claims are false and misleading."

The plaintiffs also said 70% of U.S. and Canadian consumers consider environmental sustainability crucial when making purchases, citing a study by the National Retail Federation and IBM.

In a statement on Thursday responding to the lawsuit, Apple did not discuss the case but defended its environmental record.

"We've drastically cut emissions for Apple Watch by over 75%, and we are investing significantly in nature-based projects to remove hundreds of thousands of metric tons of carbon from the air," it said. "We detail our work prominently and transparently for our users."

The Cupertino, California-based company has aimed to be carbon neutral by 2030, including in its supply chain. Wednesday's lawsuit seeks unspecified damages and an injunction blocking Apple from marketing the three watches as carbon neutral. **Reuters**

BITS & BYTES

STEM HIRING

With tech companies expanding their hiring focus to tier 2 and tier 3 cities, jobs for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) graduates from these regions is expected to rise by 15-20 per cent by 2027, a report said on Friday.

STEM opportunities are growing in locations such as Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Pune. Additionally, India's overall STEM sector is projected to see a 40-45 per cent increase by 2027, driven by rising demand for skilled professionals across industries, according to the report by NLB Services. **IANS**

FACE THE FACTS

Delhi Police has solved a burglary case with the help of the facial recognition system (FRS) technology and arrested two men, officials said on Friday. Police said that stolen cash amounting to Rs 5.87 lakh along with diamonds and pearls broken from the stolen jewellery has been recovered.

A PCR call was received on February 16 reporting a burglary at a house in Mukherjee Nagar in Northwest Delhi, police said.

A police team analysed CCTV footage and obtained a clear image of the suspect. Using FRS technology, the suspect was identified as Imran (28) from Timarpur, who is a habitual offender with a previous involvement in theft, officials said. **PTI**

LENOVO WINS APPEAL

Lenovo on Friday won an appeal in Britain in its attempt to get an interim licence to use Ericsson's patents, in the latest ruling in the companies' global licensing dispute over 5G wireless technology.

Lenovo sued Ericsson at London's High Court in 2023, one of several cases brought by Lenovo or Ericsson around the world which has seen the companies trade lawsuits in Brazil, Colombia and the United States. The dispute centres on the fair, reasonable, and non-discriminatory (FRAND) terms for a licence to use Lenovo and Ericsson's patents. Disputes over FRAND licensing have led to global legal battles in the telecom industry. **Reuters**

Darshan allowed to travel across India

HC lifts restrictions after actor requests changes to accommodate professional, legal obligations

The Karnataka High Court has lifted travel restrictions on actor Darshan in the Renukaswamy murder case. The Friday ruling allows Darshan to travel throughout India, easing previous limitations that confined him to Bengaluru and the sessions court jurisdiction.

The actor, listed as an accused in the case, requested this modification to accommodate his professional commitments and legal obligations, particularly concerning the ongoing Supreme Court proceedings. The defence presented arguments highlighting Darshan's need to visit Delhi and other locations for legal matters, specifically regarding the case currently under Supreme Court review.

The application for expanded travel privileges followed Darshan's extended custody period after his June 2024 arrest. Special Public Prosecutor Prasanna Kumar contested the request, noting that Darshan's initial bail plea cited health concerns, contrasting with his current desire for nationwide travel. The court, however, ruled in Darshan's favour, permitting him unrestricted travel across India.

On February 25, Darshan, Pavithra Gowda, and 15 co-accused presented themselves at the Bengaluru local court, fulfilling their bail requirements. During the session, several accused individuals reported experiencing police pressure to become case approvers.

Advocate Sunil, representing other defendants, voiced concerns, stating, "The case should be fought on merit by the police, there should not be pressure." The court indicated that such grievances could be addressed through future petitions, with proceedings set to continue on April 8.

The case centres on Renukaswamy's death, a Chitradurga resident who allegedly sent inappropriate messages to Pavithra Gowda. This led to a confrontation with Darshan, who maintained a relationship with Pavithra whilst married to Vijayalaxmi. Authorities arrested Darshan, Pavithra, and others on June 11, 2024, for their alleged involvement in Renukaswamy's abduction and killing. Probe revealed that Renukaswamy's support for Vijayalaxmi and criticism of Pavithra sparked the conflict. —Rachana Ramesh

Police notice via Whatsapp nullified

The High Court has nullified a police notice sent through WhatsApp to a student charged with identity theft. Justice SR Krishna Kumar cited the Supreme Court's previous ruling that WhatsApp notices cannot replace official notice delivery methods outlined in the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 (BNSS) . Whilst invalidating the WhatsApp notice, the High Court permitted the police to issue a new notice following legal procedures. The Supreme Court clarified last month that electronic platforms cannot serve as valid alternatives for delivering notices to accused persons.

Share market rout

The Indian stock market on Friday witnessed a sharp sell-off as weak global cues and trade tensions weighed on investor sentiment and both the domestic benchmark indices ended the day with heavy losses.

The Sensex plunged **1,414** points, or **1.9%**

Closes at **73,198** after touching an intraday low of **73,141**

Index lost: **2,113** points, or **2.8%**, over the week and dropped **4,303** points, or 5.6 per cent, in February

15%: Fall from it's all-time high of **85,978**

The Nifty 50 also suffered significant losses, falling **420** points, or **1.86%**

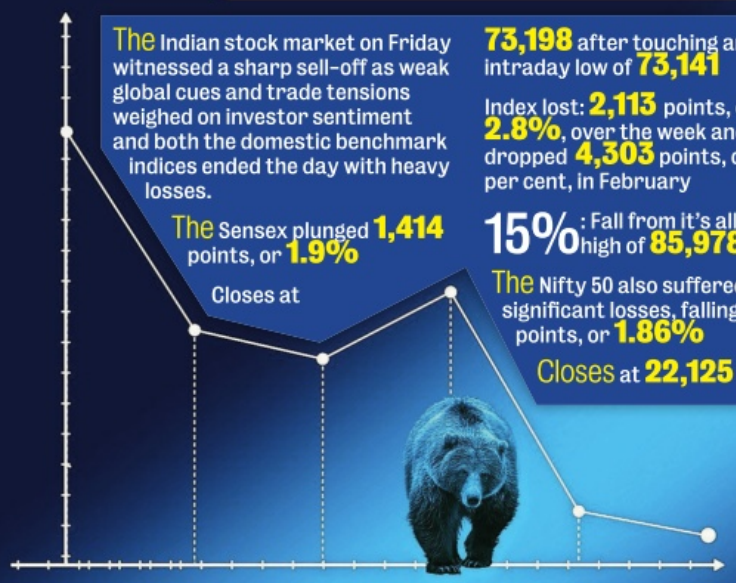
Closes at **22,125** after hitting a low of **22,105** during the intra-day session.

Index lost: **5.9%** in February and is now down nearly 16% from its record high of **26,277.**

Top losers:

The IndusInd Bank emerged as the top loser, plunging **7%**

Tech Mahindra, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bharti Airtel, Tata Motors, Titan, Infosys, and Nestle India fell between **4%** and **6%**



TRUMP EFFECT The market opened on a weak note after US President Donald Trump announced plans to impose tariffs on Canada and Mexico starting March 4. Additionally, Trump threatened to levy an extra 10 per cent tariff on China, further worsening global trade concerns.

AROUNDTHEWORLD

Greece erupts in protests

Protesters hurled petrol bombs and set fire to trash cans in Athens on Friday as hundreds of thousands of Greeks went on strike and took to the streets in nationwide demonstrations on the second anniversary of the country's deadliest train crash.
Fifty-seven people were killed when a passenger train filled with students collided with a freight train on February 28, 2023 in central Greece.
"The government hasn't done anything to get justice," said Christos Main, 57, a musician at the Athens rally. "This wasn't an accident, it was murder," he said.
In one of the biggest protests in Greece in years, public services and many private businesses were brought to a halt and people poured into the streets chanting "murderers" against what they say is the state's role in the disaster.
The government denies wrongdoing.A sea of people descended onto Athens' Syntagma Square in front of parliament. **Reuters**

Don't kiss and tell

South Korean police said Friday they are summoning a Japanese woman for questioning over allegedly kissing Jin, a member of the K-pop supergroup BTS, without consent during a free hug event last year.
A police officer who answered the phone at Seoul's Songpa police station said it requested the woman to appear for questioning over an allegation of sexual harassment. The police station refused to disclose her identity citing privacy.
The station said it had launched an investigation after receiving an online complaint and refused to provide further details because an investigation was under way.
Media reports said that South Korean police were able to confirm the identity of the woman with the help of Japanese police. The reports said the woman, who is in her 50s, was refusing to appear for questioning. **AP**

DOGE bullet hits forecasters

Hundreds of weather forecasters and other federal National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration employees on probationary status were fired Thursday, lawmakers and weather experts said.
Federal workers who were not let go said the afternoon layoffs included meteorologists who do crucial local forecasts in National Weather Service offices across the country.
Cuts at NOAA appeared to be happening in two rounds, one of 500 and one of 800, said Craig McLean, a former NOAA chief scientist who said he got the information from someone with first-hand knowledge. That's about 10% of NOAA's workforce. The first round of cuts were probationary employees, McLean said. There are about 375 probationary employees in the National Weather Service — where day-to-day forecasting and hazard warning is done. **AP**

CLOSERHOME

Chamoli avalanche: 32 rescued, 25 still trapped

A total of 32 Border Roads Organisation (BRO) workers have been rescued after being trapped under snow during an avalanche that struck near Mana village in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, officials said late on Friday.
Chamoli District Magistrate Sandeep Tiwari said, "Out of 57 workers trapped in the avalanche, 32 workers have been rescued."
Uttarakhand Disaster Management Department said that rescue work is being undertaken on a war footing.
" By 5:00 pm, 32 people had been rescued safely. The process of evacuating the remaining 25 people is in progress. Relief and rescue work is going on on a war footing to rescue people trapped in the avalanche 6 km ahead of Badrinath Dham in Chamoli district," Disaster Management Department said.
The Uttarakhand government on Friday issued helpline numbers for people to get any assistance or information related to the avalanche. People are encouraged to contact the helpline numbers, operated through the state. **ANI**

Behold, the solar flare 'kernel'

Images from ISRO's Aditya-L1 -- India's first mission to the Sun -- reveal a solar flare 'kernel' in the lower layers of the atmosphere, providing new insights into the star's explosive activities, according to an analysis.
Seen as bright areas on the Sun, solar flares are giant explosions sending energy, light and high-speed particles into space, thereby impacting space weather and potentially disrupting radio communications and satellite operations.
Researchers from the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) in Pune said that on February 22, 2024, the Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT) instrument on-board Aditya-L1 captured an image of the X6.3-class solar flare, one of the most intense kind of solar eruptions. **PTI**

India-EU free trade pact soon

The delegations from India and the European Union held delegations on a range of topics in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and EU President Ursula von der Leyen, and the leaders have directed their teams to conclude the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations by this year, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Friday.
External Affairs Secretary (West) Tanmay Lal, said 20 union cabinet ministers and Ministers of State engaged in discussions. **ANI**

Board enforces firm measures for fair exams

The Karnataka School Education and Assessment Board (KSEAB) will conduct the 2nd Pre-university Course (PUC) annual examinations for 2025 from Saturday. The exams will go on until March 20. The Board has completed all necessary preparations and urged students to appear for the exams without fear.

A total of 7,13,862 students have registered for the exams, including 6,01,474 fresh candidates, 34,071 repeaters, and 18,317 private candidates. Among them, 3,35,468 are male students, 3,78,389 are female students, and 5 are transgender candidates. In terms of streams, 2,91,959 students have opted for Science, 2,29,308 for Commerce, and 1,92,595 for Arts. A KSEAB official said that the exams will be conducted across 1,171 centers, with 5,050 invigilators overseeing the process. After completion, the answer scripts will be evaluated by 31,000 examiners, across 76 evaluation centers. The official highlighted that for the first time, webcasting will be implemented to improve transparency in the entire process.

To maintain the integrity of the examination, the official noted that stringent security measures have been put in place. A total of 2,342 special vigilance teams and 504 flying squads have been deployed to monitor exam centers, while 365 designated routes have been established for secure question paper distribution. "On exam days, a 200-meter radius around all centers will be declared a restricted zone, prohibiting the operation of photocopy shops, cyber cafés, and computer centers during exam hours. District education officers have been instructed to strictly enforce these measures," the official added.

The Board has urged students to stay focused on their preparation, and not fall for rumours regarding question paper leaks. Students are also advised to reach the exam center well in advance, carry their admit card, bring extra pens, carry a water bottle, and manage their time effectively. With enhanced security arrangements and digital monitoring, the Karnataka PUC Board aims to ensure a smooth and fair examination process for all candidates. — BMB

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Yogita Sambhaji Shedale W/o Sambhaji Rajaram Shedale R/o 19123, Prestige Lakeside Habitat, Gunjur, Bengaluru 560087 have changed my name to Yogita Kadam Affidavit Dt.28/02/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I Ariya Bindu V W/O, Anil Kumar V S R/o 90, 2nd Main, 3rd Cross, Bhaarath Layout, Varanasi Main Road, Jinkethimmanahalli, Bangalore - 560036 have changed my name to Sweta Bindu L V.

I, KRISHNA, Residing at Flat #212, Pearl Park , Valagerahalli,R V Niketan, Bangalore – 560059, have changed my name to KRISHNA VENKAPPA YARAGUDRI, vide affidavit dated 28/02/2025, sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

I, MUNMUN SUR, R/O 204 VV GRAND REGENCY, ABAIAH REDDY LAYOUT, KAGDASPURA, BANGALORE-93 have changed my name to MUNMUN DUTTA.

I, Neha Bam Bam Kumar Baranwal W/o Bam Bam Kumar R/o A-105, A-Block, Alpine Eco Apts, Alpine Eco Rd, Doddanekkundi Post, B'lore-560037 Have Changed My Name To Neha Baranwal For All Purposes.

I, Aakash Aalok Jain S/o Aalok Jain R/o Flat No. 323, 2nd Floor, DSR Sunrise Towers, Channasandra Main Road, Bangalore-560067 Have Changed My Name To Aakash Jain For All Purposes.

I, Nishi Bam Bam Kumar Baranwal D/o Bam Bam Kumar R/O A-105, A-block, Alpine Eco Apts, Alpine Eco Rd,Doddanekkundi Post, B'lore-560037 Have Changed My Name To Nishi Baranwal For All Purposes.

I, Bharathi Bai (Aadhar Number 9243 8826 9782), daughter of late Upendra Shenoy.H and wife of Suresh Mallya, aged about 78 years, residing at 314, 7th A Main, Kalyan Nagar 1st Block, Bangalore-560043 hereby make it known that I am also known by names such as Bharathi Bai.H/ Bharathi.H/ H. Bharathi Bai/ Mrs. Bharathi Bai/ Dr. H .Bharathi/ Dr. H. Bharathi Bai/ Dr Bharathi Bai/ Bharathi Mallya/ Bharathi Suresh Mallya and Bharathi Suresh. All these names belong to the same person that is me and I have sworn to and declared this fact before Notary and advocate Sri Y.R.Chandrasekar, B.Com, LLB of Kanakanagar, R.T Nagar, Bangalore vide affidavit dated 27/02/2025

I, SIDDARTH CHINMOY BHATTACHARYA, S/o Chinmoy Bhattacharya, R/o Villa 7, Pocket 4, Vasant Vihar, Vidyanagar, Bilmaranahalli Bengaluru – 562157, have changed my name as SIDDARTH BHATTACHARYA vide affidavit dated 27.02.2025, sworn before notary S. Subashini, Bengaluru.

I, M F ANNE SHYL alias ANNE SHYL MARIA FRANCIS, W/o Arun Xavier Louis, R/o AG4, Parimala Trinity Apartment, Boganahalli Road, Panathur, Bengaluru - 560103, have changed my name as ANNE SHYL, vide affidavit dated 28.02.2025, sworn before notary S. Subashini, Bengaluru.

I, Mr. VISHAL, S/o. Vasant Shivappa Shet, R/a No. MC 1802, Golden Grand Apartment,Tumkur Road, Yeshwanthpur Metro Station, Yeshwanthpur, B'lore – 560022. In my Aadhar card, PAN card, and education records my name is mentioned as Vishal but in my driving license my name is mentioned as Vishal Vasantha Shet. I further state that both names belongs to me and the same person. vide affidavit dated 28-02-2025 sworn before notary Onkarappa N R, B'lore.

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AMRITSAR VAISHNODEVI SRINAGAR 16 DAYS
MAR: 18, 29 APR: 6, 11, 18, 23, 30, MAY: 6, 12, 18, 24, 30

KASHI AYODHYA GAYA/HARIDWAR* 11/16* DAYS
APR: 13*, 20* 20, 27* MAY: 3, 9, 11*, 15, 23, 24* JUN: 1*, 2, 8, 8* 19

KASHI AYODHYA/BADRI KEDAR* 14*/21 DAYS
APRIL: 22, 27, 29* MAY: 3, 9, 10*, 15, 16*, 21, 22*, 28* JUN: 2, 8, 9*

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HEALTH TIP: Foods containing omega-3 fatty acids, like fish and nuts, contribute to heart health

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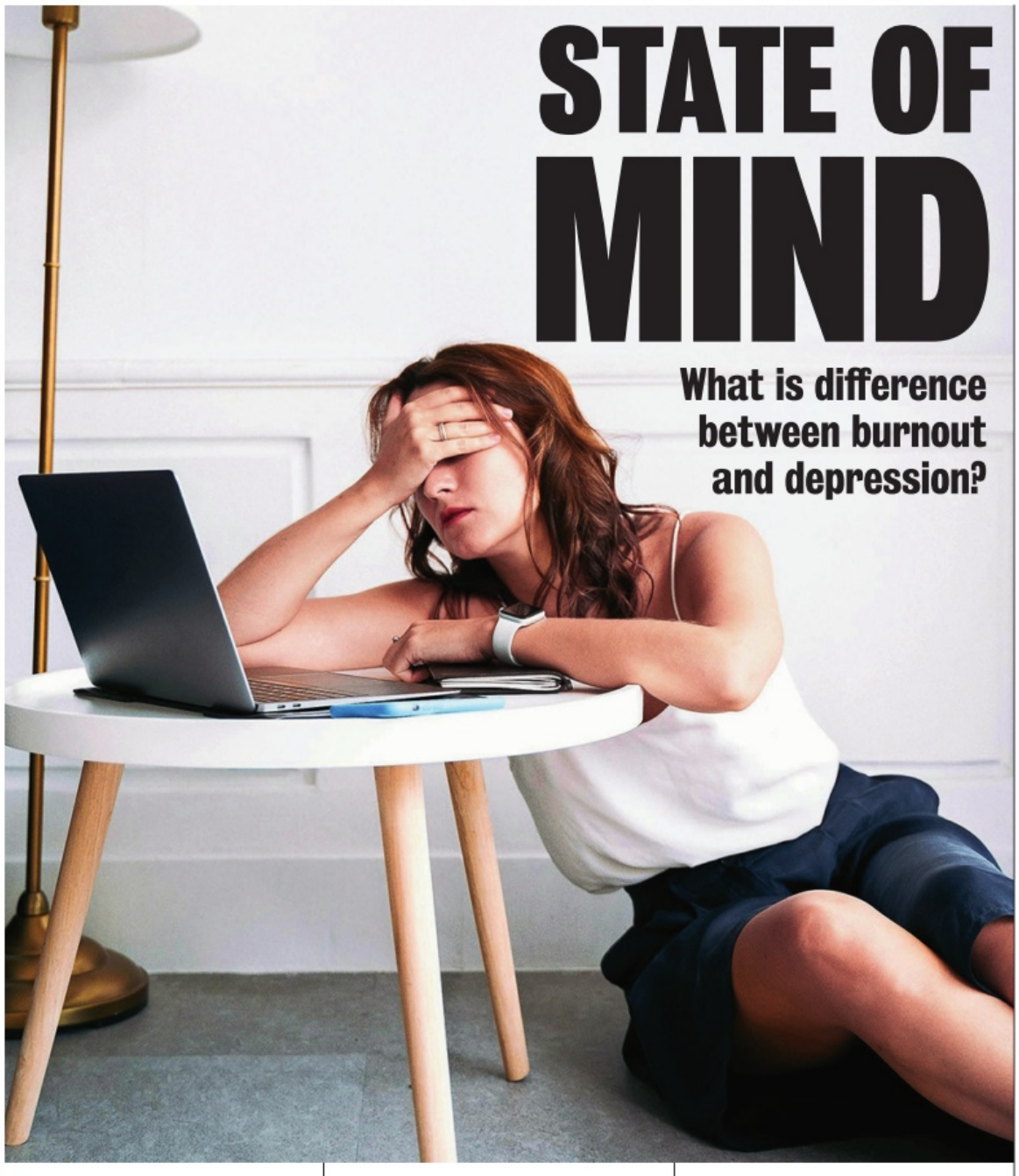
STATE OF MIND

What is difference between burnout and depression?



If your summer holiday already feels like a distant memory, you're not alone. Burnout – a state of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion following prolonged stress – has been described in workplaces since a 5th century monastery in Egypt.

Burnout and depression can look similar and are relatively common conditions. It's estimated that 30% of the Australian workforce is feeling some level of burnout, while almost 20% of Australians are diagnosed with depression at some point in their lives.

So what's the difference between burnout and depression?

Burnout is marked by helplessness and depression by hopelessness. They can have different causes and should also be managed differently.

What is burnout?

The World Health Organisation defines burnout as an "occupational phenomenon" resulting from excessively demanding workload pressures. While it is typically associated with the workplace, carers of children or elderly parents with demanding needs are also at risk.

Our research created a set of burnout symptoms we captured in the Sydney Burnout Measure to assist self-diagnosis and clinicians undertaking assessments. They include:

- exhaustion as the primary symptom
- brain fog (poor concentration and memory)
- difficulty finding pleasure in anything
- social withdrawal
- an unsettled mood (feeling anxious and irritable)
- impaired work performance (this may be result of other symptoms such as fatigue).

People can develop a "burning out" phase after intense work demands over only a week or two. A "burnout" stage usually follows years of unrelenting work pressure.

What is depression?

A depressive episode involves a drop in self-worth, increase in self-criticism and feelings of wanting to give up. Not everyone with these symptoms will have clinical depression, which requires a diagnosis and has an additional set of symptoms.

Clinically diagnosed depression can vary by mood, how long it lasts and whether it comes back. There are two types of clinical depression:

melancholic depression has genetic causes, with episodes largely coming "out of the blue"

non-melancholic depression is caused by environmental factors, often triggered by significant life events which cause a drop in self-worth.

When we created our burnout measure, we compared burnout symptoms with these two types of depression.

Burnout shares some features with melancholic depression, but they tend to be general symptoms, such as feeling a loss of pleasure, energy and concentration skills.

We found there were more similarities between burnout and non-melancholic (environmental) depression. This included a lack of motivation and difficulties sleeping or being cheered up, perhaps reflecting the fact both have environmental causes.

Looking for the root cause

The differences between burnout and depression become clearer when we look at why they happen.

Personality comes into play. Our work suggests a trait like perfectionism puts people at a much higher risk of burnout. But they may be less likely to become depressed as they tend to avoid stressful events and keep things under control.

Those with burnout generally feel overwhelmed by demands or deadlines they can't meet, creating a sense of helplessness.

On the other hand, those with depression report lowered self-esteem. So rather than helpless they feel that they and their future is hopeless.

However it is not uncommon for someone to experience both burnout and depression at once. For example, a boss may place excessive work demands on an employee, putting them at risk of burnout. At the same time, the employer may also humiliate that employee and contribute to an episode of non-melancholic depression.

What can you do?

A principal strategy in managing burnout is identifying the contributing stressors. For many people, this is the workplace. Taking a break, even a short one, or scheduling some time off can help.

Australians now have the right to disconnect, meaning they don't have to answer work phone calls or emails after hours. Setting boundaries can help separate home and work life.

Burnout can also be caused by compromised work roles, work insecurity or inequity. More broadly, a dictatorial organisational structure can make employees feel devalued. In the workplace, environmental factors, such as excessive noise, can be a contributor. Addressing these factors can help prevent burnout.

As for managing symptoms, the monks had the right idea. Strenuous exercise, meditation and mindfulness are effective ways to deal with everyday stress.

Deeper contributing factors, including traits such as perfectionism, should be managed by a skilled clinical psychologist.

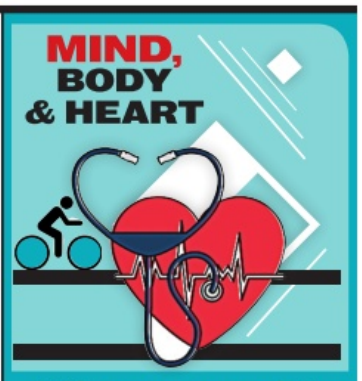
For melancholic depression, clinicians will often recommend antidepressant medication.

For non-melancholic depression, clinicians will help address and manage triggers that are the root cause. Others will benefit from antidepressants or formal psychotherapy.

While misdiagnosis between depression and burnout can occur, burnout can mimic other medical conditions such as anemia or hypothyroidism.

For the right diagnosis, it's best to speak to your doctor or clinician who should seek to obtain a sense of "the whole picture". Only then, once a burnout diagnosis has been affirmed and other possible causes ruled out, should effective support strategies be put in place.

(By Gordon Parker, UNSW Sydney, The Conversation)



All you need to know about...

Covid after-effect

Complications continue

While the Covid-19 pandemic is over, its effects continue to haunt a large majority of people infected by the infectious disease. Two separate studies have shown that several neurological and respiratory disorders as well as other health complications continue to affect people who were hospitalised with the disease.

Study

In the first study, a team of researchers from France studied data from nearly 64,000 French residents who were followed for up to 30 months. Their findings, published in the journal Infectious Diseases, showed that patients who were hospitalised due to Covid have experienced a higher rate of deaths from any cause -- 5,218 per 100,000 people.

In the 30 months monitored, these people were more likely to be hospitalised for any reason. And they were particularly at high risk for neurological, psychiatric, cardiovascular, and respiratory problems.

While there was no difference between men and women in the risk of hospitalisation, women were hospitalised more due to psychiatric problems. Elderly over 70 years of age were also at high risk of hospitalisation due to organ-specific disorders. Notably, the risks remained high for up to 30 months for neurological and respiratory disorders, chronic kidney failure, and diabetes.

30 months on

"Even 30 months after hospitalisation, Covid-19 patients remained at an increased risk of death or severe health complications, reflecting the long-lasting, wider consequences of the disease on people's lives," said Dr Charles Burdet, an Infectious Diseases specialist, at Universite Paris Cite.

"These findings are a stark reminder of the far-reaching impact of Covid, which extends far beyond the initial infection," added lead author Dr Sarah Tubiana, infectious diseases expert, at the Clinical Investigation Center at Bichat Hospital (Paris). —IANS

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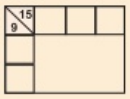
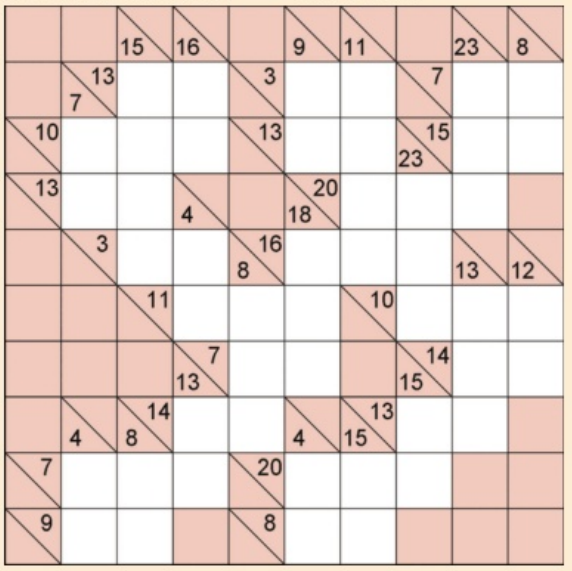
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

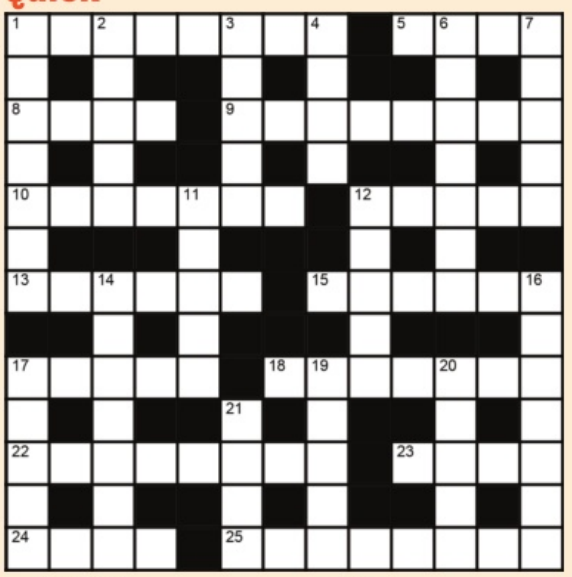


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Highly instinctive (8)
5 Coup d'- ___ : change of Govt. (4)
8 Disastrous defeat (4)
9 Offer lower price (8)
10 Expressed indirectly (7)
12 Fortunate (5)
13 Staying out of sight (6)
15 Arctic abodes (6)
17 Not suitable (5)
18 Official language of Karnataka (7)
22 Neuralgia of hip and thigh (8)
23 Capital of Ukraine (4)
24 Therefore; hence (4)
25 Ultimately (2,3,3)

DOWN

1 Glossy finish for wood surface (7)
2 Collapse (5)
3 Awaken (5)
4 Put on cargo (4)
6 Cigarette component (7)
7 In these times (5)
11 Otherwise? (2,3)
12 Boston's airport (5)
14 ___ in : being a seller of? (7)
16 Deprived of food (7)
17 Point in dispute (5)
19 Alter to suit (5)
20 Come up (5)
21 Stereo (2-2)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: G EQUALS T

E ZCQDK KYLEPY, EP AVEYL, GWY OCYGVH CL ZCVKU NU GWY VWHGWBESND SVYNGECP CL AYNQGH.

Linemaro

Seeing you made my day

Mindchow

Thinkers think and doers do. But until the thinkers do and the doers think, progress will be just another word in the already overburdened vocabulary of the talkers who talk

Joke of the day

A biologist, a chemist, and a statistician are out hunting. The biologist shoots at a deer and misses 5ft to the left, the chemist takes a shot and misses 5ft to the right, the statistician yells "We got 'em!"

Loop

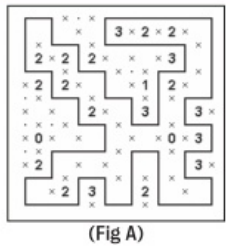
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

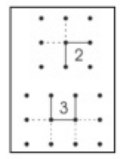
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

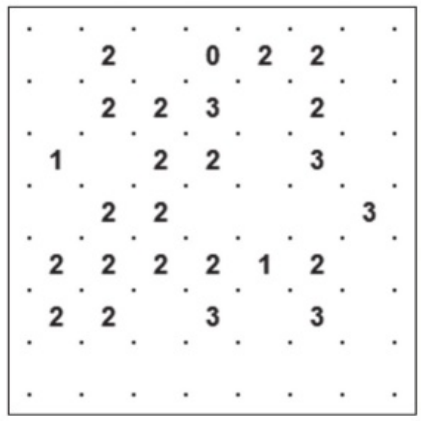
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



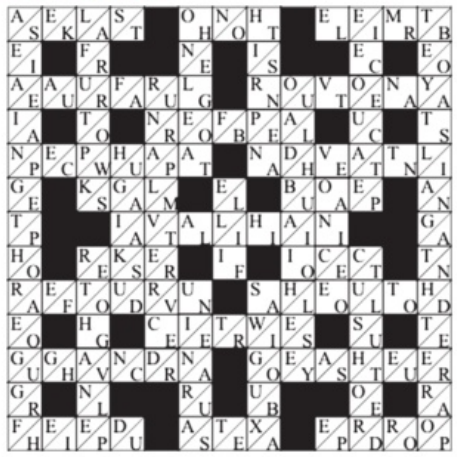
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



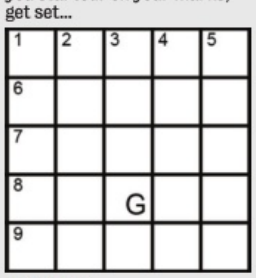
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

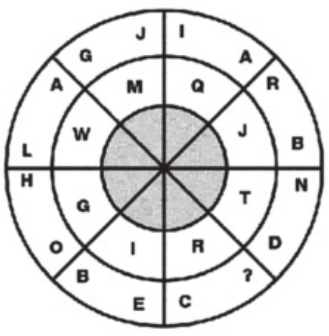
1 Bob at; 6 Gelid; 7 Nurse; 8 Roget; 9 Boney

DOWN

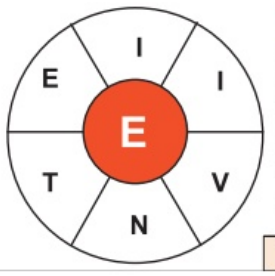
1 Eagre; 2 Rub LB; 3 No big; 4 No doe; 5 Et sty

Mensapuzzle

Which letter will make this puzzle correct?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

06 Average; 07 Good; 09 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

4	3		7		1		2	9
	5	7		9		1	6	
5			4		6			8
	4						7	
1			8		7			3
	8	5		6		3	9	
2	1		9		8		4	6

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 3
1 4 5 5

Medium = 11
1 3 6 8

Hard = 13
5 6 8 6

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Leg is moved. 2. Hat is tilted. 3. Window is not as wide. 4. Woman's hair is different. 5. Finger is moved. 6. Collar is different.

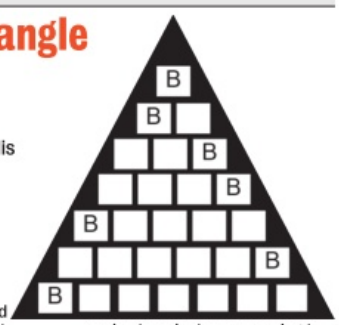
Riddler

Based on the following clues can you make 2 phrases with the same letters in the same order, but with different spacing?

1. Precipitating fish archery + Multi-color sea life
2. God of love took charge + Small container did nothing

Alpha triangle

1 Second letter
2 Bushel, abbr.
3 Cause friction
4 Restrain
5 Die Hard star Willis
6 Little angel
7 Meat trader

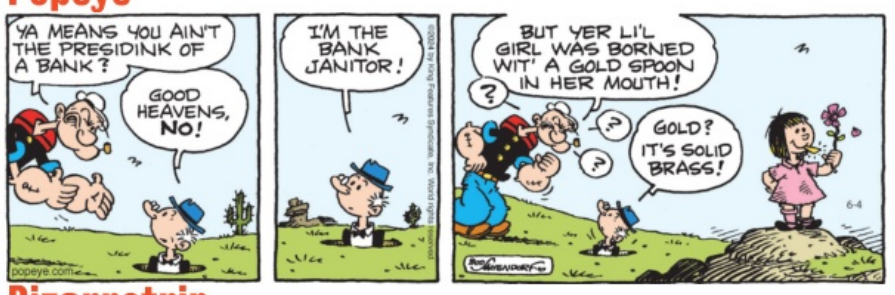


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye


YA MEANS YOU AIN'T THE PRESIDINK OF A BANK?
GOOD HEAVENS, NO!
I'M THE BANK JANITOR!
BUT YER LI'L GIRL WAS BORNED WIT' A GOLD SPOON IN HER MOUTH!
GOLD? IT'S SOLID BRASS!
popeye.com

Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

Crankshaft

Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
A productive and fulfilling day awaits as the moon blesses you with happiness and good health. Your confidence will shine, helping you excel in all areas of life. Important business decisions could lead to growth, enhancing your prestige.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
A sluggish day may slow you down, making it hard to focus on goals. Unrealistic expectations could lead to disappointment. Avoid impulsive decisions and reckless driving, especially on adventure trips.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Financial gains from past investments will brighten your day. With minimal effort, you'll see positive outcomes, and new income sources may emerge. Couples might receive good news regarding children, while success comes effortlessly.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Happiness and success define your day. Strategic business decisions could yield long-term benefits, and your reputation may get a boost. A meeting with an influential person might open new professional doors.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Patience and happiness will shape your work style today. Efficiency will help you complete tasks smoothly, and a visit to a religious place or charitable act may be on your mind. Love relationships will strengthen.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Low energy and delays may impact work efficiency and reputation. Relationship tensions could arise, with lovebirds facing potential breakups. Job seekers may experience setbacks. Avoid reckless driving and adventure trips.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
A positive aura surrounds you, bringing stability and control. A new business partnership may take shape, and long-distance travel could be on the horizon. Strengthening bonds with your spouse will enhance domestic harmony.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Outstanding workplace performance could lead to recognition or promotion. Financial rewards are possible, and health issues may see improvement. Resolved disputes with siblings will bring peace, while job seekers might land new opportunities.

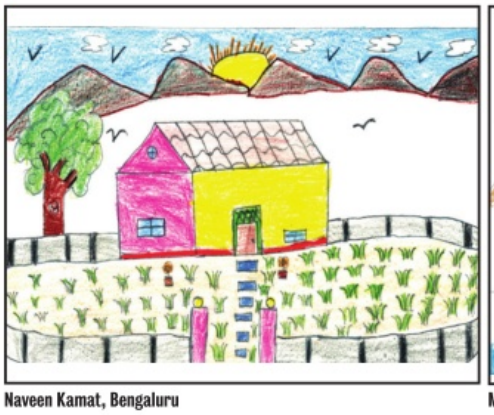
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Education takes priority—either for your children or yourself. Couples may receive good news regarding children, and singles might find a soulmate. Professionals in education, consulting, and banking will excel.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Dissatisfaction and challenges in handling responsibilities may arise. Investments could underperform, and elderly family members' health may require attention. Postpone home renovations and read documents carefully before signing.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Family disputes, particularly with siblings, may be resolved, strengthening relationships. Your energy will help you tackle difficult tasks, and a short work-related trip might expand your professional network. Helping others will boost your social standing.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
A family-focused day brings joy. New income sources could emerge, strengthening your finances. Wise spending will prevent unnecessary expenses, and a significant purchase might elevate your social status.

KIDZONE



Naveen Kamat, Bengaluru

Mehat, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

24÷1.2 = 24 x (1/1+(1/20))
= 24 x (1/1+(1/5))
= 24 x (1/(6/5)) = 20

2(2.5+5) = 2 x (2+(10)+5
= 2 x (2+(1/5)+5
= 2 x (5/2)+5
= 2 x (15/2) = 15
20 x 2.5 + 15 =
50 + 15 = 65

QUOTE UNCODE

I would define, in brief, the poetry of words as the rhythmical creation of beauty.

FAST FIVE

A	B	B	O	T
G	L	I	D	E
R	U	N	E	S
E	R	G	O	T
E	B	O	N	Y

BULL'S EYE

even, event, invite, INVITEE, teen, tine, vein, vent, vine

STRIKE OUT

S	K	A	T	H	O	T	L	I	M	B				
E	R		F	U	L	N	O	V	E	N	A			
I	O	N	O	B	E	L	C		T					
N	E	W	H	A	T	A	D	V	A	N	I			
G	S	A	L	E		B	A	P		N				
T		I	T	A	L	I	A	N		G				
H	E	K	E		F	I	C	C		T				
R	E	T	U	R	N	S	L	E	U	T	H			
	N	A	P	T		K	A	N	A	N	A	D	A	
I		O									T			
M	P	L	I	E	D		L	U	C	K	Y			
		F					O				S			
H	I	D	I	N	G		I	G	L	O	O	S		
							O				C			
E	R	G	O		I	N	T	H	E	E	N	D		

QUICK

V	I	S	C	E	R	A	L		E	T	A	T		
S	C	I	A	T	I	C	A		K	I	E	V		
I	M	P	L	I	E	D		L	U	C	K	Y		
H	I	D	I	N	G		I	G	L	O	O	S		
E	R	G	O		I	N	T	H	E	E	N	D		

MENSA PUZZLE

F, Add together the numerical values of the letters which appear in the outer segments, and put the letter with this value in the inner segment, one place clockwise.

RIDDLER

1. RainBowFish + Rainbow Fish &
2. Cupid Led + Cup
Ided

SUDOKU

2	1	3	9	5	8	7	4	6
7	8	5	2	6	4	3	9	1
6	9	4	1	7	3	2	8	5
1	6	9	8	2	7	4	5	3
3	4	8	5	1	9	6	7	2
5	7	2	4	3	6	9	1	8
9	2	1	6	4	5	8	3	7
8	5	7	3	9	2	1	6	4
4	3	6	7	8	1	5	2	9

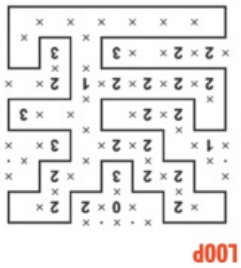
ALPHA TRIANGLE

B, Bu, Rub, Curb, Bruce, Cherub, Butcher.

GO FIGURE

Easy
5 + 4 - 1 - 5 = 3
Medium
3 x 6 + 1 - 8 = 11
Hard
5 x 6 / 6 + 8 = 13

LOOP



KAKURO

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Fair deal
Lyricists-composers sign MoU for fair contracts from producers and music companies

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New parents-to-be on the block

Congratulations are in order for Kiara, Sidharth

Kiara Advani and Sidharth Malhotra recently set social media abuzz with the announcement of their first pregnancy. The couple, who tied the knot in February 2023, received an outpouring of love and congratulations from Bollywood actors and fans alike. There was a time when Sidharth shared his thoughts on marriage and parenting.

In an old interview with DNA India, Sidharth was seen promoting his 2016 film 'Baar Baar Dekho', and the actor spoke candidly about his perspective on marriage. He acknowledged his belief in the institution, shaped by his upbringing in a middle-class environment where joint families were the norm. He believes that, in today's age, marriage has become just a tagline.

"I think I will only get married when I want to have babies. Otherwise, it would be unfair to the child to not give him/her a name. Until then, it doesn't matter. You can be with whoever you want to. Marriage is just a technicality; it doesn't change your love for that person," he stated.

Sidharth and Kiara shared the screen together in 'Shershaah', and the 2021 war drama, directed by Vishnuvardhan, made people shower love on their on-screen chemistry. They had an intimate wedding ceremony in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

Nearly two years later, the couple have now revealed that they are expecting their first child. Their Instagram post, featuring a pair of tiny baby socks, was captioned, "The greatest gift of our lives. Coming soon." Kareena Kapoor Khan, Alia Bhatt, Rakul Preet Singh, Samantha Ruth Prabhu, and more shared their excitement for the news.

On the work front, Sidharth Malhotra has been busy filming his upcoming romantic comedy, 'Param Sundari', alongside Janhvi Kapoor. Directed by Tushar Jalota, Param Sundari is set to hit theatres on July 25. Meanwhile, Kiara Advani will be seen sharing the screen with Hrithik Roshan in 'War 2'.

—ETimes

'Fake info': Tamannaah to take legal action

There were reports circulating on the internet about actress Tamannaah Bhatia being summoned by the Puducherry Police in connection with a Rs 2.4 crore cryptocurrency fraud case. Now, she has addressed these reports, calling them "fake and misleading." The Baahubali actress also assured that legal action would be taken against those spreading such misinformation about her.

In her statement to Hindustan Times, Tamannaah said, "It has come to my attention that rumours are being circulated alleging my involvement and dealings with cryptocurrency. I'd like to request my friends in the media not to circulate any such fake, misleading, and false reports and rumours." The actress also emphasised that her legal team is already looking into the matter.

Reports surfaced earlier on Friday, alleging that both Tamannaah and Kajal Aggarwal might be called in for questioning by the Puducherry Police regarding an alleged cryptocurrency scam. According to the website, a complaint was filed by Puducherry resident Ashokan, who claimed that a Coimbatore-based firm defrauded him and ten others of Rs 2.4 crore through a crypto investment scheme. Ashokan alleged that Tamannaah was present at the company's launch event in 2022, while Kajal attended another related function in Mahabaleshwar. These reports suggested that the police had sought clarification from the actresses. However, no official statement has been issued by the authorities. On the work front, Tamannaah was last seen in 'Sikandar Ka Mukaddar', which was released on OTT. She will next appear in 'Odela 2'.

—ETimes

Scary, but too long

APAAYAVIDE ECCHARIKE
2.5 RATING ★★½☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Abhijith Thirthahalli
- **ACTORS** Vikash Uthaiah, Radha Bhagavati, Raghav Kodachadri, Mithun Thirthahalli, Harini Srikanth
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 146 minutes

Abhijith Thirthahalli's maiden movie as a director is a good effort as he has not only handled the megaphone with aplomb but also played a key character like an experienced actor. His dialogue delivery and acting skills are appreciable. The movie, which is a mix of themes such as love, sentiments, greed and has a message for the society, is shot in a haunting and dense forest. The forest is not only a visual treat but also scary. Cinematographer and music director Sunaad Gowtham has excelled in both assignments.

The movie is about three bachelors Suri (Vikash Uthaiah), Petge (Raghav Kodachadri), and Gaabri (Mithun Thirthahalli). The problem with these bachelors is that they want to remain parasites rather than leading a dignified life. They are not in a position even to pay their room rent. They happen to meet Talent (Abhijith Thirthahalli) in a local bar and restaurant. Later, they decide to join Antony (Lankesh Ravana), a smuggler, to earn money. They decide to impress Antony by smuggling sandalwood from the forest but they find the latter's body in the forest. What happens to Suri and his friends and Talent is what Apaayavide Eccharike is all about.

Vikash Uthaiah, who makes debut as a hero in Sandalwood with this movie, is at his best. Mithun Thirthahalli, as a coward, has acted well. His dialogue delivery and gestures will make audiences have a hearty laugh. Raghav Kodachadri, as the most clever and cautious youth, has acted well. Radha Bhagavati looks good in romantic scenes. Ashwin Hassan plays a different character that has two shades.

Among the songs, Churuku Notave is good.

The film stretches a bit too much, say around 15 to 20 minutes. If it were kept shorter, it would been a good entertainer.

However, it may appeal to all kinds of audiences.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

A thriller with many characters on the run

FIR 6 TO 6
2.5 RATING ★★½☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Ramana Raj KV
- **ACTORS** Vijay Raghavendra, Siri Raju, Yash Shetty, Swathi Satish, Yashaa S, Vidhya Bharan, Nagendra
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 118 minutes

This is Ramana Raj KV's first attempt as a director in Sandalwood. Raj has tried to say so many things at once, without realising the futility of such efforts and methods. The director has failed to realise the importance of a crisp screenplay and narration that is not all muddled up.

The movie begins with a police officer instructing his subordinates to tighten vigil on a vehicle and to keep the media away. The next scene is Jyothi (Siri Raju), the better half of Police Inspector Garuda (Vijay Raghavendra), waiting for her husband while some anti-social elements are trying to enter her house. Garuda is seen driving a jeep and cautioning his wife not to open the door.

The next scene is two drunkards creating nuisance at a bar and restaurant. Later, one senior citizen is seen getting thrashed by goons for no valid reason. The other scene is about a girl eloping with her lover. Meanwhile, Garuda comes home only to find his wife is missing. He comes to know that Randhawa (Yash Shetty), the crime lord, has kidnapped his wife. You have to watch the movie to know whether or not Garuda succeeds in rescuing his wife.

As far as the performances of the actors are concerned, Vijay Raghavendra plays a different character. He is good in action sequences. Yash Shetty is convincing as a vicious villain. Bala Rajawadi, Vidya Bharan, Yashaa S, and Swathi Satish have provided good support.

MS Thyagaraja's music is passable.

It is worth a watch if you crave action movies.

—Y Maheswara Reddy